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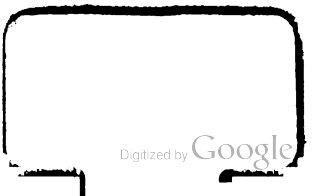
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THE ARTIST'S LOVE.

BY

MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

AUTHOR OF "FAIR PLAY," "HOW HE WON HER," "CHANGED BRIDES," "BRIDE'S FATE," "CRUEL AS THE GRAVE," "TRIED FOR HER LIFE," "RETRIBUTION," "THE LOST HEIRESS," "FORTUNE SEEKER," "DESERTED WIFE," ETC.

AND STORIES BY HER SISTER,

MRS. FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

AUTHOR OF "THE BRIDE'S SECRET," ETC.

"A thousand phantasies
Of calling shapes and beck'ning shadows dire,
And airy tongues that syllable men's names."

MILTON'S COMUS.

PHILADELPHIA:
T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS;
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DR. S. A. H. McKIM,

OF WASHINGTON CITY,

THIS

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WITH

THE ESTEEM AND FRIENDSHIP

OF THE AUTHORS.

WASHINGTON CITY, OCTOBER, 1872.

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CONTENTS

THE ARTIST'S LOVE:

Chapter		PAGE
I.	IN THE MAD HOUSE	23
II.	IN THE OLD OAK PARLOR	28
III.	IN CLIFF COTTAGE	29
IV.	IN LOVE	40
V.	IN PARADISE	44
VI.	IN DANGER	51
VII.	IN PURGATORY	59
VIII.	OUTCAST	70
IX.	THROUGH WEARY YEARS	76
X.	WONDERS AT WITCH ELMS	80
XI.	BACK TO LIFE AND LOVE	99

KRISS KRINGLE 103
A NEW YEAR'S SURPRISE 111
FAIRY'S SECRET 119
A JOYOUS THANKSGIVING 127
EDNA'S WORTH 136
THE MAGIC CRUSE 146
JUDGED TOO SOON 159
WHAT THE FUTURE BROUGHT 167
HOW THEY PAID HIM 175
THE GOLD BRIDE 186
FRANK HAWLEY'S LOVE 194
THE LITTLE ONES ARE SAFE 205
DON'T BORROW 212
LUCY'S JEWELS 219

Digitized by Google

PAGE
AUNT ADA'S RUSE..... 228
THAT OLD MAID..... 237
A NIGHT OF TERROR..... 246
THE LOST LOVE..... 255
DOOMED..... 268
THE LOVER'S GHOST..... 275
HIRAM HELPER'S FAITH..... 283
RICHER THAN HE THOUGHT..... 292
THE NEW MOTHER..... 303
AN AWFUL WARNING..... 310
AT HIS OWN FUNERAL..... 321
SAVED..... 332
THE BABY'S SPIRIT..... 343
A HERO'S LOVE..... 349
THE POST-MISTRESS OF PEAKVILLE..... 357
THE COST OF A SHIRT..... 367
CAROL'S FORGIVENESS..... 377
WARNED BY A DREAM..... 385
WILLARD GRAYSON'S REVENGE..... 393
REMOVING THE MASK..... 399
A NOBLE SERVICE..... 410
LOST LEE..... 419
THE POWER OF A SMILE..... 429
COURTSHIP..... 437
SAY SO THEN..... 446
THE BELLE'S BLUNDER..... 454
SAVED BY A SONG..... 463
THE PRIEST'S STORY..... 471

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THE ARTIST'S LOVE.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

"I vouch not for the truth, do ye see;
But tell the tale, as 'twas told to me."

CHAPTER I.

IN THE MAD HOUSE.

"HAPPY? Yes; always quite happy; does she not look so? And always of course quite harmless," said the doctor in answer to my question, regarding a patient, whose rooms we had just left.

I was on a visit of inspection to the Good Samaritan Lunatic Asylum, and young Dr. Bennet Abbott, was my guide through the institution. He was the third assistant surgeon there, a good looking and good hearted young fellow, with face and voice full of kindly sympathy, and he was loved and trusted by nearly all his patients.

We had made the round of the wards, and done homage to all the self-fancied kings and queens, popes and heroes, and had humored the "peculiar whim" of each monomaniac, when at length, at the end of a long gallery, that looked out upon the shrubberies and upon the sea beyond, we came to the door of a cell which the doctor opened, by turning the handle, for it was not locked.

And now came a strange sweet experience. A sphere of

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infinite peace seemed to envelope me, the moment I crossed the threshold of that little room.

Its one window looked out upon the evergreen shrubberies and beyond upon the open sea, over which was shining the clear morning sun.

A large white china vase of rare exotics, sat upon the window sill and filled the room with rich aroma.

The room itself was bare enough, but beautifully clean, with whitewashed wall, waxed pine floor, and white draped bed.

On a chair by the window sat a young woman who immediately drew my attention, as the most fragile and *spirituelle* being I had ever seen or imagined. Her form, clothed in a flowing white wrapper, was so attenuated that the wonder was how it still had power to hold the soul within it.

Her face—how shall I portray it? For it seemed the face of a spirit! Bright golden brown hair curled around her broad forehead and shapely head, and fell down behind upon her graceful shoulders. Her eyes were very large, light blue, soft and clear and shaded by long lashes. Her other features were small and regular. Her complexion was singularly pure white, and transparent like very thin alabaster. But from those light blue eyes and from that wan, spiritual face, beamed a calm and radiant peace, ineffable and indescribable.

"Here is a friend come to see you, Marie," said the young doctor.

She looked at me and held out her little transparent white hand. She did not speak a word, but her whole delicate face lightened and softened as she smiled on me with a smile that reached my heart and seemed to communicate to me her own heavenly peace.

I sat down beside her. And the young doctor took the third and only remaining chair in the room.

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"You have beautiful flowers here," I said, referring to the rich exotics.

Again her fair, wan face brightened and softened with that wonderful smile, but she did not speak. Indeed speech did not seem to be her mode of communicating ideas.

"Is she a mute?" I enquired in a low tone, of the young doctor.

"Oh no! no indeed!" he answered. Then turning to his patient he said—"Marie, my dear, tell the lady about your flowers. Tell her who sends them to you, Marie."

"*My child*," she answered in a tone of ineffable tenderness. I never heard a human voice so soft, so liquid, so aerial. Those two words, "my child," sounded like two notes of an Eolian harp.

"She is a good child to send you such rich flowers," I said.

"Yes," she answered dreamily. "She is my angel."

"Where does she live, Marie," I next enquired.

She opened her light blue eyes so wide that they seemed to blaze with a soft fire as she answered—

"Why, don't you know? in Heaven! When I shut my eyes sometimes, I see her home there—a palace where walls are like mother of pearl, with windows of crystal and doors of silver, with gardens of celestial fruit and flowers all around, and ——" her voice, as she spoke, had gradually sunk to whispers, and soon became inarticulate, flowing in melodious, undistinguishable notes.

We sat in silence listening to her as we would have listened to the murmuring of a brook, or to the sighing of a breeze, until at last her voice ceased, and she sat with folded hands and wide open eyes, gazing far out over the sunlit waters, yet seeming to see nothing.

"We had better go now, if you please," said the doctor.

We both arose to leave the room.

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"Good bye, Marie," he said cheerfully, laying his hand upon her head.

His voice and touch aroused her from her reverie.

"Good bye, doctor," she answered, but her voice sounded as if it came from afar, or like the distant *echo* of her voice.

I held out my hand in silence; for somehow I fell into Marie's favorite mute way of communicating.

She smiled upon me with her heavenly smile, and so filled my soul with peace as we left her presence.

In the hall outside I said to the doctor—

"Here is at least one happy inmate. Is she always so?"

And he answered in the words with which this story opened.

"She interests me more than any one I have ever seen," I added.

"I do not wonder. Hers is the strangest case I ever met with," he answered.

"What brought her here?"

"Mania, of course. *Her* mania being that she is constantly attended and helped by the spirit of her child, who prompts, in others, all the kindness that is shown her, causing them to send her flowers for instance, and who opens to her the gates of Paradise, giving her glimpses of the glory within."

"Was it the loss of her child that turned her brain?"

The doctor paused for a moment, his fine face clouded over, and then in a deep whisper, he answered gravely,

"She was accused of having murdered her child."

I started with a half suppressed scream, and shrank back with horror.

There was silence between us for a moment, and then I recovered myself and exclaimed with irrepressible indignation—

"It is impossible! She, never, no, not even in a paroxysm of insanity, could have committed such a crime!"

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"It is generally believed that she did, however—but of course, in a fit of desperation."

"*I* do not believe it!" I repeated with all the earnestness of my soul.

"Do you remember," enquired the doctor, as we walked down the long passage together—"Do you remember the case of that Marie Serafinne, who was tried at Pine Cliffs, in this State, for infanticide some years ago?"

"I remember hearing and reading of it, yes."

"Well, the woman we have just left, is that very Marie Serafinne."

I gazed at the speaker in mute astonishment for the space of a minute, and then broke silence by exclaiming incredulously:

"What! why that trial took place, at least fourteen years ago, and the girl at the time was said to be sixteen years of age. That would make her now, if she were living, thirty years old. And this girl cannot be more than twenty."

"That is one of the strange features in her strange case. For the last two years she has been changing back again to youth and almost to childhood in appearance. But she is in truth that Marie Serafinne who was tried for infanticide fourteen years ago, and who owed her acquittal to the legal ability, logic and eloquence of that good and great Ishmael Worth."

"You amaze me! I cannot yet credit this story," I answered musingly.

"Come, I will convince you. I will go into the drawing-room this evening, and tell you the whole story, as I have learned it partly from herself and partly from others. You will acknowledge that it is the strangest story you ever heard in your life; but you must of course set down the amazing phenomena of the last two years of her life, to the fancies of her own mania."

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And so saying, the doctor guided me out of the long hall and through the shrubberies, to the part of the building occupied by the surgeon-in-charge.

I may as well state here, to make all clear, that I was a cousin of the surgeon's wife, and then on my first visit at their house, to spend the Christmas holidays.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE OLD OAK PARLOR.

THAT night I went into the drawing-room, as by appointment, to hear the story of Marie Serafinne from the lips of the young doctor.

Dr. Hamilton, the surgeon in charge, was making his last evening tour of inspection through the asylum, a duty that would occupy him for two or three hours. My cousin, Eleanor, his wife, was in her nursery, seeing her children put to bed, and soothing her teething baby—duties that would employ her for an indefinite portion of the evening.

So that I was alone in the drawing-room, with the prospect of remaining so, until Doctor Abbott should come in and join me.

It was an old-fashioned, long, low-ceiled room in an old-fashioned country house, adjoining which the new asylum had been built, when the old manor was purchased by the State for the purpose.

The doctor preferred the old house to any part of the new building, and so, with his family, he now occupied it.

I walked up and down the long, low-ceiled room, now looking from the back window out upon the darkening wintry sky, and sea, over which heavy black clouds were

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rising; and now pausing before the enormous wood-fire that was roaring in the broad old fire-place, and that the keenness of the sea air made it absolutely necessary even in this early winter weather.

A storm was rising, heavy clouds blackened over the sea, and the wind moaned around the house.

I closed the shutters and turned from the window for the last time, and went and sat down in a low chair before the fire, with my feet upon the iron fender.

I had sat there but a few minutes when the young doctor turned the knob of the door, opened it, and quietly entered.

"I am true to my appointment, Mrs. Middleton," he said, as he drew a chair to one side of the fire and sat down.

I thanked him, and remarked that a heavy storm was coming up.

"That," he said, "would be a fit and proper accompaniment to the wild story I have to tell."

And then and there, as we sat by the great wood-fire in the old manor-house amid storm and darkness, howling wind and beating rain, he told me the weird story of Marie Serafinne, first again reminding me that all which was supernatural and incredible in the narrative, I might, if I pleased, ascribe to the hallucination of the heroine. I tell the story as I heard it.

CHAPTER III.

IN CLIFF COTTAGE.

MARY SERAFINNE lived near the small hamlet of Pine Cliffs, on the Shenandoah River.

Though her father and her mother had long passed to the

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spirit world, she could not be called an orphan, for she was tenderly cared for by her aged grandmother.

They were very poor and lived in a hut of one room with a loft above it, a shed behind it, and a rude fence enclosing a little bit of a garden around it;—just so much land as lay in the hollow under the lofty shelving cliff that overhung the river at that point, seeming ready to topple down and crush the little hut like an eggshell.

But as the shelving cliff had overhung the river for thousands of years without falling, its great protecting roof was trusted as a safe shelter rather than feared as a possible danger.

Here Marie and her granny lived. Here they cultivated their small garden, kept a cow, and raised poultry.

From these three resources, garden, cow and poultry-yard, they got fresh vegetables and fruit, milk, butter and eggs enough for their own consumption, besides having a large surplus for sale, which Marie took in every day to the village and sold to the hotel during the whole of the summer season, when the village was full of tourists.

With the price of this produce Marie bought tea and sugar, flour and salt, and also other simple necessaries such as they could not raise on their own little place.

The summer was their busy and profitable season. But it needed strict economy to enable them to lay up a little each summer for the coming winter. For in the winter their only source of revenue was from the woolen socks and mittens which they knit and sold to the villagers.

Marie Serafinne was a favorite in the village, and, indeed, in the whole neighborhood—"welcome in hall and hut."

All loved the gentle girl. But most especially children loved her, for she loved children.

Often when in summer she would return home from the village and bring empty buckets and a half filled purse, her

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granny, counting the money with the avarice of age, would say to her:

"Why, Marie, you took out ten quarts of milk at ten cents a quart, and here you have brought me empty pails and only ninety cents."

"Well, but granny, I met Emma and Willy, and they asked me for milk and I gave them each a drink."

And then Granny Thompson would groan and declare it was the French blood of her father, and it was a pity her own only "darter" had "married of a Frenchman."

One time, returning with empty baskets, Marie would be arraigned with:

"Dear, dear me! Didn't I send you out with fifteen quarts of raspberries at five cents a quart, and here you have brought me only sixty-five cents. Where's the other ten?"

"Granny, I met Susy and Nelly and Fanny, and I gave each of 'em a handful of berries. I couldn't help it, granny!"

Another time:

"How is this, Marie? I sent you out with a peck of sugar pears, and here you have brought back only the price of three quarters of a peck!"

"O, Granny! there was Jenny and Ally and Minnie and Ida saw the pears, and I gave them some! It is so natural for children to love fruit, granny! And if you had only seen them a-putting their dear little teeth into the pears, you'd a felt as if you was paid!"

"No, I wouldn't, neither! I don't see it at all! And no more would you, only for your father's French blood! Pity your mother ever married of a Lafayette French soldier! Mind, now, it's going to be the ruin on you! You can't say *no* to nobody! And you'd give away your very feet, if anybody wanted them, and go on crutches all your life!"

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This was strongly put, but it was nearly true of Marie Serafinne. Love of self had no place in her soul. It was filled with the love of others. To see others happy was, with her, to be very happy; to see others miserable was, with her, to be very miserable. And she knew no other happiness, no other misery.

But in the innocent joy and gladness of children she became ecstatic, and in their sorrow or suffering she suffered intensely until she could relieve them.

It was from this trait of character that Marie was best known and loved.

"What a mother she will make, some day!" said her poor neighbors.

"What an excellent nurse she would be; what a treasure in a houseful of children!" said her rich neighbors.

But Marie's chance of being happy in the position of either mother or nurse seemed very remote.

She belonged to her granny.

It is true that many of the young farmers of the neighborhood were struck by her rare beauty, but partly because she was always so busily at work cultivating her garden, feeding her poultry, milking her cow, or carrying fruit and vegetables, milk, butter, and eggs to the village, that she had no time to listen to them; partly because, when she did play, she played with children only, so that she seemed to be still but a child herself; and partly, also, because she was so extremely shy, none of her young distant admirers ever approached her with words of love.

But, ah! there came a time when the child-woman loved "with a love that was her doom."

One bright summer morning she went, as usual, to the village hotel with a basket of fruit to offer for sale to the visitors there.

It was a simple, country place, and ladies and gentlemen,

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nurses and children, were gathered upon the front porch enjoying the morning air and the magnificent mountain scenery before them.

Marie, who went in and out the house like any pet kitten, stepped on the porch, as usual, and passed among the ladies, offering her fruit.

While doing so, she overheard a voice murmur:

"What a beautiful face! Just my idea of the Virgin before the annunciation, while she was still an unconscious child in Judea! Observe that pure, white forehead, with its aureole of golden curls like a halo around it; those clear, bright blue eyes, full of soft splendor; that perfect mouth."

Marie had no suspicion that the speaker was talking of her; but she involuntarily turned around, and, as she did so, she met the gaze of a pair of large, dark eyes fixed in adoration upon her face.

Marie blushed deeply, and averted her head. And soon she took her basket and moved from the spot. But she carried with her a vision of a fine dark face, shaded with silken black curls and moustache, and lighted by a pair of large, soft, deeply shaded black eyes.

And without suspicion of wrong or danger, she thought of that fine dark face with innocent delight.

As she walked home with her empty basket, she wondered who the owner was, whether he was a visitor at the hotel, and how long he was going to stay, and if she should ever see him again. And then, with a slight feeling of pain for which she could not account, she tried to guess which of those rich, happy, handsomely dressed lady visitors it was whom he thought to be as beautiful as the blessed Virgin!

So deep was her reverie, that she reached home before she was aware. Indeed, she might have passed the little gate,

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and gone on unconsciously, had she not heard cries of distress which immediately arrested her steps.

Thinking only of her old granny then, she turned hastily into the garden, and followed the sound of the cries.

It led her through the hut into the back shed, where she found the old woman uttering loud lamentations.

Marie had scarcely time to ask what the matter was when the old woman exclaimed:

"Oh, Marie! Mooley is dead! Mooley is dead! And now we too shall die!—shall starve to death!"

"How did it happen?" faltered the girl in well-founded fear, for indeed the cow was half their living.

"Oh, she fell over the cliff! She fell over the cliff! She missed her footing, and fell over the cliff and broke her neck, and died at once! Come, look at her!" cried the old woman, sobbing and wringing her hands.

And she led Marie through the back door of the shed, and along the base of the cliff, until they came to the spot where the body of the cow lay.

Marie knelt down and tenderly stroked the face of her poor dumb friend, and saw that she was dead indeed.

"Don't cry, dear granny! I'm sorry for poor Mooley; but don't you be afraid; we shall not starve! I know they want another laundress at the hotel, and I can take in washing enough to make up for the loss of the milk and butter," she said cheerfully, as she helped the dame back to the hut.

And that same afternoon Marie went back to the village on a double errand—to engage washing from the hotel, and to get the tanner to come and take away the body of poor Mooley.

And she succeeded in both missions.

After this Marie worked harder than ever, for she found

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washing and ironing more laborious than milking and butter making, while it was not quite so profitable.

Yet Marie would not, for this cause, let her poor old granny suffer for the want of any of her accustomed comforts. She bought milk and butter enough for their simple meals from a neighboring farmer.

And now her busy life for a few days kept her thoughts from dwelling on the dark, handsome face that had made such an impression on her imagination, especially as she had not seen that face since it first glowed upon her.

But one day, about a week after that first accidental meeting, she went to the village to carry a basket of clean clothes, and she was returning with a basket heavily laden with soiled linen, when, feeling great fatigue, she laid down her burden for a moment, and sat down to rest in the wood.

She threw off her hat to cool her head, and as she did so she saw for the first time, a young man seated on a rock near by, with a portfolio on his knees and a pencil in his hand.

At the same moment that she perceived him, he also looked up.

And with strangely blended emotions of delight and dread, she recognized the dark handsome stranger she had seen at the hotel.

She quietly put on her hat, took up her heavy basket and arose to go.

"Pray do not leave. If I disturb you I will myself move off," said the young man rising.

"Oh no, no, you do not disturb me, but I was afraid—I was afraid—" she stopped and blushed.

"Afraid?" echoed the young man with an interest he could not conceal.

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"Afraid I might be intruding on *you*, I meant to say," added Marie, looking down.

"If there be an intruder, it is certainly myself. I am a trespasser here on your native soil, and if you leave on my account I shall take it as a rebuke," said the stranger gravely.

The simple girl did not more than half understand him, but she gathered enough of his meaning to enable her to answer:

"You have as much right here as I have, for I have no more than the birds. The Lord lets us all come."

"Will you sit down then and rest as you meant to do? If you don't, I will go away," said the stranger, gathering up his portfolio and pencils.

For all reply, Marie put down her basket and resumed her seat, and sat there blushing and trembling — half pleased and half frightened.

And the artist resumed his seat, re-opened his portfolio, and recommenced his work.

He worked on in silence for a few minutes and then looked around at his quiet companion, and met her eyes fixed in childlike wonder and admiration upon himself.

She colored deeply and turned away her head in confusion.

The artist smiled, not without satisfaction.

"You are wondering what I am doing?" he said quietly, to reassure her. "Well, little daughter of Eve, I will satisfy your curiosity. I am sketching from nature. I am making a picture. I will show it to you, and you shall tell me what you think of it, for I know you will be a competent and honest critic."

And he arose and took the sketch from his portfolio, and came and put it into her hands.

She looked at him in a sweet surprise, then fixed her

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eyes upon the sketch, and then raised them to the scene from which it was taken.

"How do you like it?" he enquired, taking the seat by her side.

"It is beautiful!" she murmured. "It is magical. I wish I could do it."

Then she stopped and flushed, and taking up her basket, she added:

"I must go now."

"What, do I drive you away after all?"

"Oh no; but I *must* go now, please. I *must* carry this basket of clothes home."

"What! this heavy basket? you will faint by the way! Let me carry it for you," he said, lifting it upon his arm.

"Oh *no*, *no*, please! Indeed, *indeed* I would rather you wouldn't!" she pleaded trembling.

"Child, I have a little sister at home just about your age. And I carry all her burdens. It would give me pain to see her carrying anything heavy. And it gives me pain now to hear you speak of carrying this. You would not wish to give any one, even me, *pain*, would you?"

"Oh no!"

"Then let me carry this for you. And see how strong I am in comparison to you!"

And so saying he carried the basket to the rock where he had left his drawing materials, and set it down there while he strapped his portfolio to his shoulders. Then he took up her basket and rejoined her.

She made no further resistance to his help. Her confidence was entirely won.

He walked by her side conversing pleasantly on such topics as came by the way.

"I am told that there is a very picturesque scene along this road, that has never yet been sketched. It is a rock

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shelving far over the river, and having at its base and under the shadow of its shelf a small cottage with a garden. Do you know where it is?" he enquired as they walked on.

"Yes, sir; it is our rock and our cottage and garden that you mean. The rock is called the Anvil, from its shape, which is just like that of a blacksmith's anvil, reaching far forward and having a flat top. We live under it," answered Marie.

"Ah! indeed! Then we are on our way there now."

"We are very near it, sir."

"How near?" enquired the young man anxiously, as if he were not at all desirous to shorten the distance, but quite the reverse.

"About a quarter of a mile, sir."

"Ah!" he said, and slackened his steps, walking very slowly.

During that walk, the artist managed to become possessed not only of the girl's full confidence, but also of her whole history, even down to the calamity of the cow's death.

When they came in sight of the hut under the cliff, the artist broke out into enthusiastic praise of the beauty of the scene. "I must certainly sketch this, Marie," he said—"Will you permit me to come here every day and sit upon that bank there and work until I finish the picture?" he softly enquired.

"Oh, yes sir; certainly. That is, I mean, I have got no right to stop you. The place is free to you as it is to all, sir."

The artist was not quite satisfied with this reply, so he enquired farther.

"But, shall I be in any way disturbing you, Marie?"

"Oh, no sir; no indeed," she answered earnestly.

They had now reached the gate of the cottage and Marie hospitably invited her companion to come in and see her granny.

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But the artist thanked her and declined the invitation.

He set down the basket, lifted his hat and bowed to her as if she had been a princess, and turned and left the spot.

Marie stood transfixed, gazing after his receding form, until he suddenly turned and looked back, when meeting his eyes, she started with some confusion and hurried into the hut.

First she threw off her hat and went into the back shed and put the soiled linen in soak, to be washed the next day, and then she went into the one room of the hut, where her granny was nodding over her knitting. She sat down beside her and told her all about the artist she had met on the road, and about his wanting to paint the cottage, and especially about his kindness in bringing home her heavy basket, even to the cottage gate.

"That's all well enough for a big man to gin a lift for a little gal. But if he wants to draw off a picter of our house, he's got to pay for it. Poor folks like us, as has lost our cow too, can't afford to give away everything, even to the wery picter of our house," grumbled the dame.

"Oh! granny! You would never want to take the gentleman's money for that!" said Marie, feeling deeply ashamed.

"I would then! And I will too before he gets a chance to steal the picter offen it for nothing! Let him up with it indeed!" growled the old woman.

Marie made no further answer; but meekly went about her little household duties, hanging the tea kettle over the fire and setting the table for supper.

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CHAPTER IV.

IN LOVE.

THE next morning the artist came early, and seated himself upon a rock on the opposite side of the road, and just upon the banks of the river.

He took out his drawing materials, arranged them, and began to sketch the hut and the overhanging cliff.

Marie had no chance of seeing him. She was busy washing out linen in the shed at the back of the hut, and hanging it to dry on the bushes at the base of the mountain.

But the old woman saw him, and went out to "tackle" him.

She stopped before him, and leaned heavily upon her stick, for she was very infirm with age, and even that short walk had tired her.

The artist arose, with the courtesy that a gentleman shows even to the humblest of womankind, and lifted his hat.

"I don't want none of that nonsense; but, first of all, I want to know your name," she said, planting her cane more firmly into the ground, and leaning more heavily upon it.

"Talbot, madam, at your service," answered the artist, promptly, and bowing again.

"None of your soft-soap, now! I'd like to know what you came here a-drawing of a picter off from my own house and home, without leave or license!"

"I obtained permission from the young lady, madam."

"A child as knows no better 'n to give everything away, even down to the very picter of her own house and home, which her soft-heartedness will be the ruin on her yet! But

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what I mean to say is as you've got *me* to deal with now—a 'oman with a head onto her shoulders; and if it so be you want to draw off a picter of *my* house, you'll have to pay me for it."

"Willingly, madam. How much?" inquired Mr. Talbot, taking out his pocket-book.

"I don't think as a dollar would be too much for the privilege, do you?" inquired the old woman, much softened by the sight of the pocket-book.

The artist quietly put a five dollar note in her hand, saying:

"I do not think that this will be too much."

"Five! you're a real nice young man, and not a bit of the fellow as I took you for; and if you've a mind to come in and rest any time, and get a plate of berries, or a drink of water, you shall have it free and welcome!" said the delighted old woman, grinning and nodding as she turned and hobbled toward the house.

"I haint got no grown-up galls, so it don't matter if he *do* come," remarked the old creature, who still looked on her grand-daughter, Marie, as a child.

Fortunately for Marie's peace of mind, she neither saw nor heard anything of this transaction.

Washing in the shed, or hanging out her clothes on the evergreens at the foot of the mountain behind the house, she had no opportunity of seeing or hearing anything that went on in front of it.

And, besides, she hoped that her granny had forgotten her threat against the artist's pockets, and she feared even to speak to her about it, lest she should recall it to her mind.

The day passed; Marie finished her washing and ironing, and packed her clothes into the basket, to take them back to the village hotel.

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The artist had not yet availed himself of the granny's invitation to enter the house. He had eaten the luncheon he had brought with him, seated on the rock, and had quenched his thirst from the spring that sparkled near at hand; and then he had resumed his pencil, and worked steadily on his sketch, until the setting sun warned him to pack up and return to the hotel.

He had been watching out at intervals, all day, with the hope of catching a glimpse or, perhaps, even having a word with Marie; but he had not suceeeded; and now he thought he could not return to the village without seeing or speaking to her.

And he was just about to enter the little garden when he saw her come out of the door with her hat on her head, and the heavy basket on her arm.

He stepped aside to let her pass through the gate, and then he quietly took the basket from her hand, saying:

"I am going back to the village, and will carry this for you."

She flushed crimson, falteringly thanked him, and allowed him to carry it, while she walked by his side.

"You take too much trouble for me, sir," she murmured at last.

"Marie, I would do anything in the world to help or please you," he earnestly replied.

She raised her radiant light blue eyes to his face in innocent wonder.

"For I love you, Marie," he added, with a tone and look that filled her soul with terror and delight. She dropped her eyes and trembled while he went on murmuring words of love to her willing ear, until they drew near the village.

Then she awakened from her happy dream to think of his interests.

"You must not take that into the village with me, sir, please," she said in a low, timid voice.

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"And why not?"

"Oh, because it is not, indeed, fitting for a gentleman to carry a clothes basket through the public streets, you know."

Mr. Talbot knew that perfectly well.

"And with a pretty country girl walking by his side," he mentally added.

"Please, put it down, sir.. I can carry it very well the rest of the way," she pleaded, stopping short and timidly raising her eyes to his face.

He set the basket on the ground, and looking tenderly upon her slight form, he murmured:

"My darling, how gladly I would carry this for you as far as it has to go. But ah! my child, if I were to do so, I should injure you."

Marie was too ignorant to understand how it could possibly hurt her. But she knew that the action would not be "fitting" to him, so she could only smile in her ignorant trust and take up her burden.

"Will you be home all day to-morrow?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," she timidly replied.

"Mrs. Thompson asked me to come into the cottage to rest and take some fruit. Would you like to have me come?"

"Oh, yes, sir" she answered in a low voice, and then flushed rosy red, and dropped her eyes as if she suddenly felt that she had said something wrong.

"Thanks, little one! Thanks, darling! I will come!" he whispered, taking her hand, and looking first into her beautiful face, and then up and down the road.

No one was in sight. He drew her hastily to his bosom, pressed passionate kisses on her lips, and then suddenly left her side.

She remained standing where he had left her delighted,

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frightened, and utterly bewildered for a minute, and then she slowly raised her burden and went on.

In a dream she delivered the clean linen to its owner. In a dream she received the next day's washing, and left the house. In a dream she returned home.

Even if we did not know it, it would be easy to foresee the end of her dream!

CHAPTER V.

IN PARADISE.

EVERY morning the artist went and sat upon the rock opposite the Anvil Cliff to sketch. Every noon he went into the cottage, under the cliff, ostensibly to rest and take his lunch, but really to see Marie, and feast his eyes upon her rare beauty.

He always took with him some luxury from the hotel, to make himself more welcome to the old mistress of the hut. Sometimes it would be a bottle of wine, or cordial; nice biscuits, or cakes; venison steak, or tongue; or some other dainty or dainties that the granny's soul loved.

"If that young man was to stay here, and come every day, I do think I should live twenty years longer, I do feel so much better for the good wittals he fetches," she said to her grand-daughter.

Marie would smile in silence, feeling delighted that her lover should so benefit her old grandam.

Every evening he would take leave, and walk on toward the village, as far as that forest glade where he first spoke to Marie. There he would sit and wait for her, until she came along, bearing the basket with the day's washing to take home to its owner at the hotel.

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There he would rise and take the heavy burden from her arm, and bear it for her until they drew near the village, when she would take it back and carry it on to the hotel.

He would wait where she had left him until she came back, when again he would relieve her of her new burden, and walk by her side until they reached the lonely forest glade, where they would sit down upon the rock to rest and talk.

There, every evening, they met and lingered, loth to part, heedless of passing time, until some chance, like the distant sound of an early market-wagon, would rouse them to a consciousness of the hour.

Then he would raise her basket and carry it for her to the cottage gate, where, with impassioned words and caresses, he would leave her.

She would let herself in at the door, and go quietly up to the loft where she slept, and creep to her little pallet, all without disturbing the old woman, who slept in a comfortable bed in the room below.

And this went on from day to day, and from night to night, whenever a heavy rain did not prevent it.

And did the grandmother suspect nothing of all this?

No, nothing. She looked upon Marie as too young a child to be in any danger of attracting any gentleman's attention, and also as a child quite able to take care of herself in ordinary intercourse with the world.

And so, when Marie had gone every afternoon to take the clean clothes home to their owners, the old woman would sit and knit on in peace of mind until near sunset, when she would drink the tea and eat the food that Marie had left by the fire to keep warm for her supper.

And then, leaving the door unfastened for Marie to enter, she would go to bed and go to sleep, secure in the belief that the girl would be in by dark.

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Mr. Talbot soon saw the peculiar hallucination of the dame in still considering her grand-daughter a child, and he humored it by always, in *her* presence, treating Marie as a very little girl indeed.

He longed to paint Marie's portrait; and so he said to the dame, one day, after he had comforted her soul with a glass of rich old port wine at luncheon.

"I would like to paint your little grand-daughter's picture."

"Well, young man, you can do it," said the grandam; that is, you know, on the same—"

"Yes, yes; I know; I understand," hastily interrupted the artist, for fear she should go on and humiliate Marie before his face, by charging money for her sittings, which he knew she was about to do. "May I begin to-morrow?" he inquired.

"Oh yes, young man, you may begin any time, so as you do the right thing by me."

"Yes, yes; I will certainly do right. I will come to-morrow, then."

"Oh, stop, now! Don't you be in such a hurry! Hear what I've got to say first! I want to have a right understanding on two things."

"I assure you, Mrs. Thompson, I will agree to anything you propose, only, pray, let us say no more of *that* just now," exclaimed the artist.

"Well, then, I s'pose as how you wouldn't think ten dollars too much to pay me for letting you take my granddarter's picter?" persisted the old woman.

"No; nor ten times ten!" impatiently answered the artist.

"Oh, granny! granny! how *could* you do it?" cried the deeply-mortified girl, as soon as she recovered the breath of which the old woman's mercenary words had, for the minute, dispossessed her.

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"Hush up, Marie! you're a child!" snapped the dame.

Marie put her hands up to her face and wept.

The artist attempted to laugh off her distress as the irritability of a child, and soon he arose and went out to his sketching.

That evening, when they met in the forest glade, Marie again wept with mortification.

"To think," she said, "that granny could do such a thing! But she is old and childish, sir—indeed, she is very old and very childish, or she never could have done it!"

"My sweetest girl!" said the lover, caressing her, "she did quite right. In the city where I live, sitters, or models for artists, frequently get a high price, and make a comfortable living."

"But not I, oh, not I! I could not do such a thing, especially to you! to you!" she sobbed.

"You are a little goose! But what then? Will you not sit for me?"

"Oh, yes, yes! I would sit for you all day, and every day, if you wished me to do it! But not for money! Oh, no; not for money!"

"My sweetest girl! you will sit for me. I shall take so much happiness in gazing on this heavenly face while I try to transfer its beauty to the canvas. Your grandmother must take what she claims, not so much for your sittings as for my use of her cottage as a studio. There! be consoled! Think how happy I shall be while painting your picture."

And so he soothed her wounded spirit.

The next morning the artist arrived early at Cliff Cottage. He wished to have the morning light, he said.

But early as it was, Marie and her grandmother had had their breakfast, and Marie had set the room in perfect order for the reception of Mr. Talbot.

The old woman greeted him very graciously, and sat a chair for him.

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If she had not been half-blind, as well as half-silly, with age, she must have seen the vivid blush, the beaming eyes, and smiling lips with which the maiden met her lover, and must have read the language of that look aright.

But the poor blind and foolish old woman saw nothing but the painter and his subject.

Talbot was loaded like a porter, with his easel, pallet, portfolio, prepared canvas, paint-brushes, and all the paraphernalia of a travelling artist's profession.

One by one he placed them on the floor, and commenced his arrangements.

"But how about the washing, Marie? You can't sit for your picter and get that done in time to take it home this evening."

"No, granny, I told the ladies that I should not have time to do any more laundry work for a week, or may be more. And so I didn't bring away any clothes," answered Marie, as she took a seat and position according to the artist's direction.

"That's all well enough, long as Mr. Talbot does the right thing by me, 'cause it 's more profitable to me for you to sit than to wash! Still, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and the washin' was a sure thing, certain to last, and the sittin' ain't. So, I say, you ought to a held on to it, even if you had to sit up nights to do it! That's what I say!"

Marie said nothing in reply to this.

But as for Talbot, he could scarcely control the indignation he felt at the avaricious old creature, who would have heavily overtasked the delicate girl without the slightest compunction.

He applied himself to this delightful work. He wished to "paint her as he saw her" now, and afterward successively as "Hope," as "Peace," as "Joy," as "Miriam," and as the "Blessed Virgin."

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He could never tire of painting that lovely face. Thus, in fancy, he sketched out a long summer and autumn's work, careless of how much time and money it might cost him.

He worked away at the picture, while Marie sat patiently before him, and the old dame waddled about the house looking after her own affairs, until the little cracked clock, on the corner shelf, jangled out the twelve strokes of noon.

"I have tired you, Marie!" said the artist, throwing down his brush. "I have been merciless in taxing you to-day, but, indeed, I did not know how late it was till the clock struck.

"I am not tired the least," said the girl, smiling.

"You think so! But come, let us have lunch! I have brought some fine cordial, and other dainties, for grandma," he added, rising.

After the luxurious luncheon he had brought into the poor cottage had been taken, and thoroughly enjoyed by the little party of three, and Marie had cleared the table, and made the room tidy again, she resumed her sitting, and the artist recommenced his work.

The old woman fell sound asleep in her old arm-chair.

There was but little painting done that afternoon.

It was near sunset when the dame suddenly sneezed and coughed and opened her eyes.

And she *thought* she saw the artist and her granddaughter sitting close together, he with his arm around her waist, and she with her head upon his bosom. But the next instant she thought she must have dreamed it, for when she rubbed her eyes and looked again he was standing quietly before his easel, with his pallet in one hand and his brush in the other, studying the picture, and Marie was sitting motionless in her seat.

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"Ain't it a getting most too dark for to do any more painting?" she inquired, rousing herself.

"Yes, dame, I think it is," answered the artist, laying down his pallet and brush. "You have had a refreshing sleep, I hope?"

The granny answered only by a loud yawn.

The artist prepared to depart. He reversed the picture on the easel, and stood the easel up into a corner, where he begged that it might be permitted to remain untouched until the morning. He stowed his drawing and painting materials behind it. And Marie promised to take care of the whole lot.

He felt very much disappointed of his usual evening saunter with Marie, for now he knew that she had no washing to take to the village, and, therefore, no excuse for a walk.

But the old woman came, like an unconscious Fate, to his assistance.

"Marie!" she exclaimed sharply while rummaging among the little round grocery boxes, "Marie, I don't know what's come over you lately, you are grown that careless! Do you not know there ain't so much as a grain of coffee in the box for breakfast to-morrow morning?"

"I can go to the village and get some this evening, granny," eagerly replied the girl.

"Well, go then. I must have my coffee for breakfast. I can't enjoy of my breakfast withouten coffee."

Marie sprang joyfully up to get ready. Here was to be a delightful walk without even a heavy basket to be carried.

The lovers went out together.

As they crossed the threshold of the cottage the sun suddenly sunk behind the mountain, casting all the vale into shadow.

Alas! for the correspondence! That night the sun went

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down upon Marie's happiness, casting all her youthful life in sorrow!

That night, in a small neighboring hamlet, and under assumed names, there was a secret marriage contracted between the lovers, a marriage fraught with woe.

CHAPTER VI.

IN DANGER.

SUMMER passed, and the first month of Autumn was drawing to its close. The company, even to the latest loiterers, had all left the hotel—with one exception, that of the artist, Talbot, who still lingered.

"The woods," he said, "are so glorious in October, that I must paint them."

This was the excuse he gave to the last of his companions that shook hands with him on parting.

But neither his comrade nor any one else believed him.

In a little mountain hamlet like Pine Cliffs, isolated from all the rest of the world, everybody knows everything—and a great deal more—about everybody else.

All Pine Cliffs knew what kept Roland Talbot, the artist, lingering in the neighborhood; all, in fact, except the blind and doting old woman at Cliff Cottage.

The gorgeous month of October passed away.

All the portraits of Marie in the various characters the artist had thought of had been painted, and were carefully packed and dispatched to his studio in a distant city; yet still the artist lingered, though no other work was undertaken, no glorious autumn landscape was transferred to the canvas.

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The day at last came when he was *compelled* to depart.

Then he would have persuaded the beautiful cottage girl to accompany him to the city. He described to her the vastly superior comforts and conveniences, pleasures and splendors of the capitol. He painted them in the most glowing colors. But she was not tempted by the picture.

"If I could go at all, love, it would not be for any of these things, but for *you*, the love and the lord of my life. But I cannot leave the poor old woman to die alone in her age," she answered meekly, with her head upon his bosom.

Then he pleaded his own love and his loneliness without her; and he pleaded with all the ardor, earnestness and eloquence of a devoted lover who was determined to win his cause. He even promised to own her as his wife, if she would go with him.

But still clinging tenderly to him, she answered sadly through her falling tears:

"Oh! I *wish* I could! Love! I have given up to you in everything, because I love you. It makes me so happy to obey you, and so wretched to oppose you; but I *must not* leave her in her age and poverty to die alone."

Finding all his efforts to persuade Marie to go to the city in vain, the artist left her in real or pretended anger.

And she returned in despair to her cottage home.

Marie had known Roland Talbot since May. And he had been her lover from the first. It was now November. The weather had continued fine up to the day of Talbot's departure. The day after he left it suddenly changed, and there was a week of dark and clouded skies, and of fierce wind and rain, that stripped all the glorious woods of their gaudy autumn foliage. So that when at length the weather cleared, there was nothing but bare branches above, and brown leaves below.

Ah! then the weather changed with Marie's spirit also;

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clouds and darkness and desolation took possession of the soul once so radiant with sunshine and happiness.

Her physical health and strength had been failing for some time past. She could not now resume her laundry work, and toil between the village and the cottage with heavy baskets of clothes, even if she could have got custom at this dull season, which was doubtful.

The absence and silence of her lover, too, made her unspeakably wretched, and the more acutely so because within a week after his departure she had become assured of the terrible fact that she, an unacknowledged wife, would be a mother. But for her own extreme ignorance and simplicity, she might have known this months before, for it was already known to the matrons of the village, who were equally unsparing in their denunciations of the artist and "his dupe," as they called her.

The discovery filled the poor girl with dismay.

Her anguish and despair were all the fiercer and deeper that they must be suffered alone. She could not tell her fatal secret to any one, or seek sympathy or counsel anywhere. She must pass through the fiery furnace alone!

Whenever now she went to the village to sell the woolen socks and stockings that her grandmother had knit, her neighbors would look contemptuously and speak coldly to her, if they spoke at all. But often they would turn away without noticing her. All this wounded her sore heart to the quick, even before she understood the reason.

Now since her own discovery of her fatal secret she understood their hatred and contempt too well.

At length an incident, a trifling one in itself, filled her cup of sorrow and humiliation to overflowing.

As I said before, she was passionately fond of children.

One day she had been out in the woods all the forenoon gathering chestnuts to sell. In the afternoon she was

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taking these to the village when she met a crowd of children out for their ramble. She knew them. They had been her darling pets.

At the sight of their happy faces, she almost forgot her terrible trouble. She smiled on them, opened her basket of chestnuts, and invited them to come and help themselves

But the children shrank away from her in fear and aversion, and huddled together as if for mutual support.

"Won't you speak to me, Emma? Won't *you*, Ida?" she pleaded in heart-broken tones, as she held out her hand beseechingly.

Neither of the children addressed replied to her.

"Mamma says we must not speak to you ever again, because you're a very wicked girl," answered Jenny, the eldest of the group. And the other children huddled around her as if for protection.

And none else spoke to the stricken girl, except the tender-hearted two year old Gladdy, who said:

"*Poor* May-ee!" and ran towards her with outstretched hands.

But the nurse snatched the child up and carried her off, followed by the other children.

Wild with anguish, Marie cast her basket of chestnuts away, and threw herself upon the ground, crying to the only Merciful Heart she knew:

"Have I been so wicked? Lord and Saviour, who never yet rebuked a poor, loving woman, have I been so wicked? Loving Lord, who had no words but words of pity for poor sinning women, forgive and help me now!"

Stretched face downward upon the dead leaves, she wept and sobbed in a wild storm of sorrow and humiliation, until she heard the footsteps of some approaching passenger, when she started up, and forgetting her basket, hurried towards her home.

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It was nearly dark within the hut when she entered the door.

The old woman was hovering over the wood fire that she now stirred into a blaze to see the face of her grand-daughter.

That face, seen in the bright light, was pale and haggard with anguish, and the eyes were still streaming with tears.

"Why, what on the yeth is the matter with you, gall?" enquired the old woman aghast.

"Oh, Granny! Granny! the children hurt my feelings so! They wouldn't even speak to me. They wouldn't!" cried the girl, bursting into fresh tears and sobs.

"And why wouldn't they speak to you, I'd like to know? Drot their impidince! ain't *my* granddarter as good as any o' them?" wrathfully enquired the dame.

"Oh! no, no, no!" cried the girl, unable longer to bear the load of her secret anguish, and goaded to confession. "Oh! no! no! no! I am a lost and wretched creature!"

"What—what—what—what do you mean? You *ain't* been stealing? Oh, Lord! you *ain't* been stealing?" faltered the old woman in bewilderment and terror.

"Oh, no, not that. I couldn't do that! But, oh granny! I'm lost! I'm lost!" cried the girl, sinking at the dame's feet.

And with her face in the dame's lap, and in wild and broken words she poured forth the story of her love and trust betrayed!

"I never heerd of sich a thing in all the days of my life, no, not since I was a gal!—as a child like you being so took in! And I don't see now how it could a been. And I can't hardly believe it! Why, how old be ye?"

"You know, I shall be—be—sixteen, next—next Christmas," sobbed Marie.

"Shill you, now? How time do pass! And I was thinking as you was about thirteen or fourteen. *The wil-*

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lain! But it was my fau't, it warn't you'rn. What did you know? It was my fau't as should a took better care on ye. And so he promised to own you for his wife from the first, did he, and kept puttin' it off?"

"Yes;" sobbed Marie.

"And he wanted you to follow him to the city, and leave me, did he? and he promised to own you there?"

"Yes."

"He wouldn't a kept his word, child. Them devils never keep their word with a girl who trusts them. They are liars, and sons of the father of lies. The comfort is they all go home to their daddy at last."

"Oh, Granny, he is not as bad as that. He is not bad at all. He wanted me to go with him, and I wouldn't leave you," wept Marie.

"He wanted you to go to the city with him, did he, and you wouldn't leave me? Well, you shall both be suited, you and him! You shall go to the city and shall not leave me. I'll go along of you. We'll go and hunt up my fine gentleman, and make him do ye justice! Breach o' promise it be! And wery aggrawated at that! 'Dancin' bears must pay for their airs.' And he shall pay for hizzen too. If he do acknowledge ye, you'll be a rich 'oman and me too! An' if he *don't*, it 'il be thousands o' dollars out'n his pocket and into your'n an' mine!" mumbled the old woman.

Poor Marie! She had been very much surprised and confounded by her grandmother's unexpected and hearty sympathy; but here was the sad solution of the problem of her conduct—cupidity. The hope of thousands of dollars, that in either case of acknowledged marriage or of breach of promise, would come into Marie's possession, and practically into her own—and of the external decencies and comforts, those thousands would secure to her, and which in her estimation, would be splendors and luxuries.

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Now, she looked upon her grand-daughter, as a mine of wealth, and busied herself in waiting on the girl, as the girl, until this night, had waited on her.

She made Marie lie down on the bed and rest, while she herself prepared tea and toast which she persuaded her to take.

"Now you shan't go up and sleep on that hard pallet in the cold loft. You shall sleep with me," said the dame as she replenished the fire to keep it up all night, and then closed up the cottage, previous to retiring.

A heavy load was lifted from Marie's conscience. She had confessed to that one, to whom of all on earth, she was only responsible. And she had been forgiven.

If that hard old dame could pity and pardon her, would not the merciful Lord, much more? She prayed and fell asleep, and for the first time in many days, she slept soundly until morning.

When she woke, the sun was shining through the uncurtained window of the hut. The old woman was, or seemed to be, still asleep. She arose very cautiously lest she should awaken the old grandame, and quietly dressed herself, and made up the fire and put on the kettle.

The dame slept on.

She made the corn griddle cake and put it on to bake. Took a smoked herring from its stick and put it on to broil, and then set the humble table for two, and sat down to wait.

And the dame slept on.

Not to waste time, while waiting, Marie took up her grandmother's knitting, and knitted for about fifteen minutes. And still the dame slept on.

She sleeps later than I ever knew her to do," said the girl, as she arose and went to the bed side, and laid her hand softly on the forehead of the sleeper.

With a scream she started back.

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That forehead was ice-cold in death!

In a few moments she so far overcame her terror and repugnance as to take the lifeless hand in her own.

But it was as rigid as marble, and could not be moved from its position.

Full of wild horror, Marie ran from the house, and up the road leading to the village, and accosted the first person she met, who happened to be a countryman.

The alarm was soon given, and the hut was soon filled with the poor neighbors.

A physician was called, who pronounced the case a death from natural causes.

Then orders were given for a cheap burial at the county's expense. This was adding humiliation to sorrow in Marie's case, but she could not help it, for there were not two dollars in the house to meet the costs of interment.

Two days after this the body of old Granny Thompson was buried, and poor Marie was left alone in the solitary hut.

She wrote to her lover in the city; but whether he ever received that letter is doubtful; that he never answered it is certain.

Three more letters were written, but they suffered the same fate as the first.

Then Marie gave up writing, and sat down in despair to await her fate.

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CHAPTER VII.

IN PURGATORY.

AWFUL days and nights followed for the poor, deserted girl.

The dark days of December were upon her. Storms of rain and wind and snow followed each other in swift succession. The road to the village became impassable. She was without money and almost without food, or fuel.

She had nothing left to eat but a few potatoes, stowed in the bottom of the cupboard, next the chimney corner, as the warmest place to keep them from freezing.

Nor had she anything to make her fire, except the brush wood from the foot of the mountain, which she would go and collect whenever an interval in the weather permitted her to do so.

But oh! the days of misery and nights of horror in that lone mountain hut, with nothing to think of but her wretched past and terrible future!

Had it not been for the shameful wrongs she had suffered, she might now have been in a comfortable and happy position as nursery governess to some of those children she so dearly loved. And this would have been an earthly Heaven to her humble and loving spirit.

And even now, abandoned, as she was, by the lover for whom she had staked all, even now, if she could have been pardoned and pitied, and cared for, a little while, by some good Christian woman, she would have looked forward to her maternity with humble, chastened joy, and devoted her future life to her child.

Yes, she would have been a good mother.

But now, abandoned, scorned, covered with contumely,

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until driven to despair and madness, she believed herself to be deserted equally by God and man.

Alone in her hut by day and night, for weeks and weeks, with those demoniac thoughts to tempt, and taunt, and phrensy her, who can wonder at the tragedy that soon followed?

I must get over this part of my story as quickly as I can, for it is too heart-rending for detail.

It was Christmas Eve, and the ground was covered a foot deep with hard frozen snow. The weather was clear though very cold.

A farmer's wife, driving her own little wagon, was going to the village that morning to buy some cheap toys to put in her children's stockings that night.

As she passed along the narrow road that lies between the foot of the mountain ridge and the edge of the river, she came in sight of the hut under the cliff, occupied by Marie Serafinne.

And at the same moment, she saw that no smoke issued from the chimney, even on this bitter cold day, and she heard sounds of wild weeping and wailing, proceeding from the house.

Mrs. Butterfield was, "after the most straitest sect a (female) Pharisee," so, though she drew up her horse before the hut, she hesitated and listened a full minute before she made up her mind to enter the dwelling of that "abandoned creature," as she called Marie.

But these were Christmas times, and full of all kindly inspirations.

So she got out of her cart, and leaving her steady, old family horse to stand and rest, she entered the hut.

A terrible sight met her eyes!

Marie Serafinne sat up in bed, raving, tearing her hair and accusing herself of—murder!

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Before her lay the small body of a prematurely born child.

The poor little corpse was frozen stiff. The miserable mother was blue and shaking with cold, for there was no fire on the hearth, and the bitter winds came in at the cracks in the walls and windows:

"Oh! you wretched, wretched creature! how came you to do this dreadful, dreadful deed," enquired the farmer's wife, aghast, at the sight.

"I don't know! I didn't mean to do it! I didn't even know when I did it! But then, I *must* have done it, because there was no one else here, not a soul but me, so of course I must have done it! Oh, me! I wish I had never been born!" exclaimed Marie, between her wild wailings.

"Of course you did it, and there's no use denying it! Oh! you horrid creature! Don't you *know* they'll hang you for it?" asked the woman with a shudder.

"Yes, yes, I know! But that's a trifle! I've borne so much worse than that! But my child! my child! My tiny, helpless child!" she cried, bursting into tears and sobs as she seized and pressed the little frozen body to her bosom.

"I can't stand this! I can't stay here!" said the farmer's wife, beginning to feel deep pity mingle with her indignation and horror, and becoming half hysterical from their conflict. "Here! lie down and let me cover you up, for goodness sake! And tell me, if you can, where I can find something to kindle a fire, or you will freeze and die before you can make your peace with Heaven."

And without waiting for a reply she forced the feeble girl back upon the pillow, and covered and tucked her up carefully.

Then she took the little frozen babe and laid it out decently on a corner of the foot of the bed, and took off her own white apron and covered it over.

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By this time her fingers were so stiff with cold that she had to beat and blow them, before she could do anything else.

She then turned about and found a little pile of brush-wood, and a box of matches with which she made a fire. Then she searched for meal or flour with which to prepare gruel for the perishing girl on the bed.

But there was nothing of the sort to be found.

"Is there anything in the house I can fix for you to eat?" she inquired, coming to Marie's side.

"Nothing, nor do I want anything," the girl answered feebly.

The farmer's wife groaned.

"I don't know what to do with you; but I reckon I better go at once and see if I can get you a doctor, and some victuals. Now you lay quiet till I come back," she said, as she hurried out of the house and jumped into her wagon.

She whipped up the old horse to a gait that made him stare. And she soon reached the village, when she gave information of the case to old Dr. Barton, the only medical man at hand.

Then, after hurriedly picking up the toys she had first set out to buy, she purchased some food and hurried back to the hut to feed the starving girl, whom, however, she could scarcely prevail upon to eat.

She waited beside the patient until the old doctor came, and then she returned to her own family, with the promise to send one of her negro women to take care of Marie Serafinne.

On seeing the condition of affairs at the hut, Dr. Barton's painful duty was clear before him—first, to do what he could to save the wretched girl, and then to report the case to the proper authorities.

And the result of his action was this—that the same day

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at noon, the Coroner's jury met at the hut, and after a brief examination of the evidence, returned a verdict that the child, a prematurely born female infant, came to its death by strangulation at the hands of its mother, Marie Serafinne.

The little body was interred at the cost of the county. And a warrant was issued for the arrest of Marie Serafinne.

And in a state more dead than alive—indifferent also to life or death, she was taken from her bed, placed in a carriage, and driven to the county gaol at Pine Cliffs.

For the first week of her imprisonment she lay lingering on the brink of the grave, but by the skill of the prison doctor, she was brought safely through the crisis of her illness.

On the first day of the New Year, she awoke from long unconsciousness, and asked what day it was.

They told her it was New Year's day.

She played idly with her thin fingers for a few minutes, and then murmured:

"Only eight months, and all this? I was free and happy in May—now I am *here!*"

No one answered her, there was indeed little pity for her.

She lay in prison from the last week in December, till the first week in March, when the Criminal Court sat at Pine Cliff.

Then she was brought out and put on trial for the murder of her child.

The trial attracted many persons to the court house. And the court room was densely crowded.

But many who had never seen Marie Serafinne, and who expected to behold in the accused a monster as revolting in appearance as the alleged crime was in essence, were astonished when they saw the slender, fragile form, and the fair, wan face and simple, child-like aspect of the young prisoner.

When she was formally arraigned and asked whether she were guilty, or not guilty, she answered very artlessly—

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"I wouldn't have hurt my poor little baby to have saved my own life, if I had known it. But I didn't know when I did it. I didn't even know I had done it. But I know I must have done it, because there was nobody else in the house. And, sir, I am willing to die for it."

She was here instructed that her informal answer would not do; but that if she could not recollect having committed the crime, she must plead "not guilty."

Then, in her obedient spirit, she pleaded as she had been told to do.

When asked if she had any counsel, she answered, "No sir."

But just then the stately form and noble face of Mr. Ishmael Worth, of the Richmond bar, one of the most eminent lawyers and humane gentlemen of the age, was seen to rise from the crowd of spectators.

He had only that day arrived in Pine Cliff, on his way to Washington City. And his presence in the court room was purely accidental—or providential.

He now advanced, and bowing to the Bench, said:

"Your Honor, I am counsel for the prisoner, if she will accept me."

His words produced the profoundest sensation. Here was a lawyer of world-wide renown, whose advocacy almost always secured a verdict for his client, whether in a criminal or a civil suit, and whose retaining fee was often as high as ten thousand dollars—offering now to give his inestimable time, talents, and legal knowledge to the defence of a poor, friendless, and penniless outcast.

"She will thankfully accept your aid, no doubt, Mr. Worth," said the judge.

Ishmael Worth bowed, and passed to the side of the young prisoner, who, after her arraignment, had been permitted to sit down in a chair, under the immediate surveillance of a constable.

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"You are willing to let me try to save you, my child?" he said kindly.

"I thank you very much, sir, but I have no money, not a cent," she answered in her apathetic way.

"Money? poor child! I do not want any from you," he answered gently.

"And besides, sir, I am willing to die," she added meekly.

"But we are not willing to let you die, especially, with an undeserved stigma upon your name, as I am sure this is."

And then, again addressing the Bench, he said:

"Your Honor, I crave of the Court opportunity to confer with my client, and to examine the evidence against her."

Then followed a short consultation between the Judge and the State's attorney. And then, as it was near the hour of noon the Court was adjourned until two P. M.

When the Judge had left the bench, the prisoner was taken to the marshal's room, where she was left alone with her counsel.

Ishmael Worth, true, tender, sympathetic, drew from the forsaken girl, the sad story of her love and trust, and bitter wrongs and sufferings. And he knew that every word she spoke was truth, except, indeed, her despairing self-accusations of the death of her babe.

"I do not believe you are guilty," he said, as soon as he had heard her to the end.

"I must be," she said piteously; "for my child was living. I heard her cry! That is all I know till I saw her dead! But I never meant to hurt her. I would have died first. *She* knows it now; for she must be an angel in Heaven."

"Hush, Marie! You are very ignorant—almost as ignorant as the Dogberries of the Coroner's jury, who found the

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verdict against you. I shall summon as a witness for the defence, the celebrated Dr. Marius Simson, who is our greatest authority in that special department of the practice of medicine that affects your case. I think his testimony will be valuable," replied Mr. Worth, as he set himself to examine a copy of the minutes of the Coroner's inquest, with which the marshal had just furnished him.

When the Court met in the afternoon, Mr. Worth asked for a postponement of the trial, until an important witness for the defence could be brought from Baltimore.

The petition was granted, and the trial postponed until that day week, the fourteenth of March.

Marie Serafinne was remanded to her prison; and the Court took up other cases of less vital importance.

Ishmael Worth deferred his visit to Washington, and gave his full attention to getting up the defence of this poor girl, as if he had been retained with a ten thousand dollar fee, or as if he had been a young barrister with his reputation depending upon the success of his first case. In the interim, he had many interviews with his client.

The day of trial came, and the Court, as before, was crowded.

The prosecution was opened by a short address of the State's attorney to the jury, followed by the calling of the first witness, Mrs. Butterfield, the farmer's wife, who discovered the dead child.

She testified to the facts within her knowledge, and which are already known to the reader.

She was followed by Dr. Barton, who being called to the stand testified that he had made a post-mortem examination of the child's body, and found from appearances that it had been born alive and subsequently strangled.

These were the only two important witnesses for the prosecution, which closed with a short summing up address by the State's attorney.

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The cross examination of witnesses was rigidly reserved for the defence.

Mr. Worth arose on the part of the prisoner. He, too, made but a short preliminary speech before calling witnesses.

First, he called in succession some of the most respectable citizens of the county, who had known the little cottage girl, Marie Serafinne, from her childhood to the present time, and could testify to the uniform gentleness and sweetness of her temper and disposition.

Finally, he called his most valuable witness—Dr. Marius Simson, of Baltimore, the greatest authority on the medical questions bearing upon this case. He had prepared himself for the present occasion by reading up the minutes of the post-mortem examination with great care.

And now being sworn and examined, he proved by a very thorough process of testimony, that the child came to her death by accidental physiological causes alone.

The doctor submitted to a very strict cross-examination by the prosecution; but that only brought out his evidence in a clearer, stronger light.

He sat down.

Doctor Barton, who had been a witness for the prosecution, was now recalled by the defence.

He was subjected to a searching cross-examination, during which he became confused, exposed his own comparative ignorance, entangled his own former testimony, and upon the whole corroborated that of Dr. Simson.

He was then permitted to retire. And Mr. Worth arose to address the jury, with one of those strong, pithy, closely reasoned and eloquent appeals that nearly always gained his cause.

And with the end of his speech the defence closed.

The Judge summed up in a very few, impartial words, and gave the case to the jury.

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Without even leaving their seats, the jury returned a prompt verdict of

"Not Guilty."

And the young prisoner was discharged from custody, and found herself at liberty before she well understood what had happened to her.

The usual great gabbling among the spectators, followed the rendering of the verdict and the adjournment of the Court.

"So, she warn't guilty after all," said one.

"But she would have been convicted and hanged all the same upon the testimony of old Dr. Barton, if Mr. Worth had not taken up the case, and brought that great Dr. Marius Simson, from Baltimore, to show up the rights of things," said another.

"And to think that Mr. Worth not only gave up all his own precious time, good for million a month almost in term time, but actually paid all the expenses of bringing this witness here, whose time was nearly as precious as his own. It was princely!"

"'Princely?' Yes! But Ishmael Worth is a prince among men!"

While these comments were being made by the crowd, Ishmael Worth took the hand of his bewildered client and drew her arm within his own, and led her into the open air in front of the Court house.

"My child, where do you wish to go?"

"First of all, on my knees, to thank you, sir, for saving my poor life, and for much more than that, for proving not only to the jury, but to my own bleeding heart that I never hurt my poor baby even while I was out of my head!"

"Stay! stay, Marie! you must kneel only to the Lord, and not to his human instrument! Where shall I take you? I wish to see you in safety before I leave you. I have to

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drive to the Wendover station, and take the train to Richmond to-night."

"I wish to go to my own little house under the cliff. But don't you trouble to take me there, sir. I can go very well alone."

"You are sure?"

"Yes, sure."

"Then, here child. Take this," he said, putting a twenty dollar bill in her hand, which she made a gesture of refusing. —"Nay, you must take it, as from a father. And here is my address. If ever you should want a friend, write to me," he added, as he forced the bank note with his card into her hand.

He was gone. And she hurried down the street, and out of the village by the road leading to her hut.

As soon as she found herself alone in the woods, she knelt down and thanked the Lord for her great deliverance, and prayed Him to bless her benefactor, Ishmael Worth.

Then she hurried on towards her hut. But when she reached the spot, a great shock awaited her. The hut had disappeared, and young men were at work digging out red sand-stone from under its late foundation. The hut, indeed, had never been her own or her grandmother's property. They had lived in it rent free, by the sufferance of the rich landholder, who owned the ground.

His interests had at last required its removal. And during the long imprisonment of its mistress, which it was supposed would end only in death, he had had it pulled down, for the sake of the quarry beneath it.

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CHAPTER VIII.

OUTCAST.

She saw and understood all at a glance; for there had been quarrying in that neighborhood before; and the chance of losing their little home through the quarrying had been one of the bugbears of her grandmother's last days.

She uttered no complaint, if indeed, there had been anything to complain of.

She only asked one of the workmen what had been done with her grandmother's little household furniture.

The man raised his head and recognized her, with a look of horror and disgust that chilled her heart.

He would not even speak, but pointed to a log cabin about a quarter of a mile distant, down on the other side of the road.

Marie turned away heart-sick of the world.

The sun was sinking behind the mountain, and the shadows were darkening over the valley!

How well she remembered one similar scene some ten months before when she took one fatal walk with her lover, and the sun went down on her happiness forever.

Night was coming on, and she had not where to lay her head!

She walked slowly towards the hut which the workman had pointed out, as containing the relics of her grandmother's poor furniture.

The log hut was occupied by a negro woman, called Aunt Sukey, and her husband and children, all slaves of the rich landholder who owned the quarry.

On seeing Marie Serafinne approach, they came out to meet her, not with words of welcome but with looks of silent aversion.

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Poor Marie explained meekly enough that she had come only to ask about her grandmother's poor household goods, that were not worth much, she added; but if the woman would give her shelter that night and the next day, or until she could think of where to go, she (the woman) might have the little bit of furniture.

"It's only a bed and a arm-chair, and some little tea things and sich! All the rest was stole, I reckon. Marse tole me to keep these, case you ever come to want 'em. So dey let you off did dey? Marse said dey would, soon's he hear Marser Worth took you up," remarked Aunt Sukey, staring at her visitor.

"They said I was not guilty. *And I was not*, Aunty," meekly replied the girl, as, no longer able to stand, she sank down and sat upon a stone.

"I dunno. Hard tellin' whedder you is or not. Well, you kin stay here to-night. Which I hopes to goodness you won't do nuffin bad to my poor chillun," said Aunt Sukey, doubtfully.

"Oh, Heaven! Do you think I am a devil?" cried poor Marie, bursting into tears.

"Dunno. Hard tellin what you is. But you kin stay here to-night, anyways, 'cause I don't spect no white person ain't agoin' to take you in. So git up offen de damp groun', and come in de house."

Marie thanked her rude hostess, and went into the hut.

The woman soon set before her a bowl of tea and a piece of corn bread and fish; and pointed to the only bed in the room, saying:

"Arter you done eating you kin go to bed dere, if you want to. Me and de chillun can sleep up in de lof, and my ole man, he gone ober to Mr. Butterfield's to work, and won't be home 'till to-morrow night."

Marie availed herself of this permission. And after eat-

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ing a little of the frugal supper, she laid down to rest, and, if possible to sleep.

The next morning she went back to the prison where she had left her clothes. They were so few that she tied them up in one small bundle.

Then she went from house to house in the village, to try to get a place in service.

She thought—poor girl!—that her acquittal by the jury, was also her perfect vindication before the world. And, remembering how willing and even anxious many families had been to take her into their service, she believed that, now she was acquitted, she might surely get some humble place.

She soon found how bitterly self deceived she had been!

She was literally and scornfully turned away from every door at which she dared to rap; until late in the day, her limbs sinking with fatigue, her eyes streaming with tears, her heart nearly breaking, she appeared once more at the negro woman's hut to beg a night's lodging, offering to pay for it over and above the furniture she had already given.

Even on those terms, the favor was grudgingly granted, for the woman's husband had come home, and he said; he "didn't want no interlopers, 'specially sich as she."

And Aunt Sukey herself gave it as her opinion that,

"The young gal had better go 'way some'ers, a long distance off, case it was sartin she never could do no good here, where she was known."

Poor Marie had come to the same sorrowful conclusion.

The next morning after partaking of the frugal breakfast set before her by her rude hostess, she tied up her little bundle and left the hut to seek her fortune away from the neighborhood.

Marie Serafinne had never been five miles away from home in her life. And to her rustic thought the neighbor-

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ing town of Wendover, distant only ten miles, was as if t had been in a foreign country.

Yet to that place she determined to go. She knew the turnpike road leading thither, only because it was called the Wendover road.

A quarter of a mile's walk across the fields brought her into the road.

She knew that the stage coach, which ran daily between the town and village, would pass her on its way to Wendover; and thanks to Mr. Worth's kindness, she had means to pay her fare; but she dared not wait for the stage and stop it, lest she should meet the eyes of some one who might know her, for, from these, the last day's bitter experience had taught her to shrink with a shuddering fear.

She therefore determined to walk the whole way, no great undertaking for a robust woman, but weary work for the poor girl wasted to a skeleton through sickness, sorrow and imprisonment.

The day, besides, was a blustering March day, after a deep spring thaw, so she toiled along the heavy, muddy road, whose clay clogged her little old shoes, and almost dragged them off her feet; and against a high head wind that nearly blew the bonnet from her head and the thin shawl from her shoulders.

Frequently she had to sit down on a stump or a stone to rest and recover her breath.

So it was nearly night when, ready to faint with fatigue and fasting, she reached the outskirts of Wendover.

Warned by bitter experience, she dared not apply for shelter at the dwelling of any white people; but she went to the first negro hut she could find, and offered money for some supper and a place to sleep.

Here, though her face was not known, she was looked upon with degrading suspicion from the mere fact of her

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having to apply to a negro hut for shelter. And when on being asked for her name, she truly gave it, the look of suspicion was changed to one of fear and dislike.

The poor slaves were, however, tempted by the offer of money, and consented to shelter her for that night on condition that she would go away early in the morning before their "masser and missis" found out anything about her being there.

Early the next morning, according to arrangement, Marie paid her darkey hostess for her lodging and left the hut.

She spent that blustering March day in wandering through the town in search of any sort of honest service from that of a nursery governess to that of a scullery maid.

But to her bitter grief she found that her dreadful story was as well known at Wendover as at Pine Cliffs.

And from every house where she dared apply she was turned away with more or less of harshness.

She was thus confirmed in the discovery that though she had been acquitted by the jury, she was not pardoned by the community.

That night sinking with fatigue and despair, she found shelter by paying for it, in another negro hut.

The next morning with her bundle on her arm, she left Wendover by the high road, neither knowing nor caring where it should lead her, so that it should take her away from the neighborhood of her bitter misery.

It would be weary work to follow poor Marie Serafinne in her months of wretched wandering over the country; for one day was like another. Every day was spent in walking on farther and farther from the scene of her sorrows, and every night was spent in some poor negro's log hut, until three weeks of wandering had passed, and her shoes were worn out, her clothing all soiled and shattered with mud, and her money dwindled to the last dollar.

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In this wretched plight, late one afternoon she approached a lonely farm house, situated in a deep fertile hollow enclosed by high hills.

As usual she went up to the house and rapped at the door, not that she had the slightest hope of being admitted, but because she never left a chance untried.

A hard-featured, care-worn woman of about forty years of age, came to the door and asked the visitor what she wanted.

"If you please, ma'am, a place," falteringly answered the weary traveller.

"What's your name?" asked the woman, in a slight German accent.

"Marie Serafinne," answered the girl, trembling with fear of the harsh repulse that had always followed the mention of her name.

But the German woman had evidently never heard of it before.

"Where did you come from?" she inquired.

"From—Pine Cliffs," answered the girl, quailing at the question.

"Don't know the place. Must be a long way from here. Got any recommendation?"

Marie paused in confusion before she replied. And then suddenly thinking of Ishmael Worth, she took his card and handed it to the woman, saying:

"That gentleman gave me leave to apply to him."

The name and fame of the great jurist and barrister had reached even this remote farm house; and the woman after reading the card told the girl she might come in.

And Marie Serafinne, thanking Heaven for the prospect of a home, followed her new mistress into a long low ceiled room, at the farther end of which was a broad fire-place, around which were gathered half a dozen boys, of ages varying from two to ten years.

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The woman then told Marie Serafinne that she wanted a girl and would try her; that she would write to Mr. Worth, and if the reference proved satisfactory, and the girl suitable, she would keep her.

Then she directed her to take off her bonnet and fall right into work, and help to get supper, as the men would soon come in from the field.

In this manner Marie Serafinne was installed in the house that was destined to be her home for many years.

CHAPTER IX.

THROUGH WEARY YEARS.

The farm, occupying the whole of a small hollow enclosed by high hills, was called "Witch Elm," from the trees that overshadowed the farm-house.

The house was very old, built of red sand-stone, in an oblong form, of two stories with an attic and a sloping roof. There were four rooms on each story, divided by a middle passage running from front to back and containing the staircase.

It was furnished plainly and substantially, partly from household goods, brought over in the emigrant ship from the old country, and partly by articles made by the master's own hand.

Carl and Anna Berger, the master and mistress of the farm, were German emigrants, who had come to this country some twenty years before, and had purchased the place upon which they lived from the bankrupt planter, whose people had owned it for a century before.

The Bergers had a very large family of thirteen chil-

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dren; that is, five girls and eight boys. Of the girls, two were married and gone away; two were in heaven; and one, the fifth and last, was a baby of ten months old.

So that the overtasked mistress of the house and mother of the family had not one daughter at home to help her.

The boys were all at home; but, however much they may have helped their father on the farm, they certainly only made more work for the mother in the house.

And, until the engagement of Marie Serafinne, there had not been a hired servant, male or female, on the place.

But, after the marriage and departure of her last grown daughter, a strong, healthy girl of eighteen, who had taken the largest half of the household work upon herself, Mrs. Berger saw the great need of getting "help," and so she closed with the very first offer of service that was made to her, and which happened to be made by Marie Serafinne.

She fully intended to get her husband to write to Mr. Worth, to whom the girl had referred, and in the meantime, while waiting an answer, to keep a strict watch over the stranger, who might be a thief.

So, for the first few weeks, she locked up all her pantries and presses, and gave out all the provisions herself, and counted all the clothing when it went into the wash, and afterwards when it came out.

But the letter was never written to Mr. Worth. The farmer was not in the habit of writing letters; and, after putting off the task from day to day, and then from week to week, he put it off forever.

This was to be regretted on Marie's account, however, for it cut her off the knowledge of the only friend she had in the world.

Gradually the strict habits in regard to Marie were also abandoned. It was tiresome to the mistress to be always watching and counting and locking up.

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"One might as well live in a prison," she said, "as to spend the days of their life in turning keys; and, besides, the girl is honest enough, as any one might see."

So in time Marie grew to be entirely trusted by her employers.

But they were not kind to her.

They were a money-grubbing set, hard to each other—harder still to her—their one white slave. They overburdened her with heavy tasks, for which they paid her too little to supply her with necessary clothing.

She did not mind this so much in the summer; but when winter came, she suffered with cold.

She labored early and late.

There was a large house of many rooms, every one of them occupied, to be looked after and kept clean. There was a large family of eight men and boys, two women and a child to be waited on, cooked for, washed, ironed, and cleaned for. There were seven cows to be milked, and all the butter and cheese to be made. All the bread was to be made and baked, and all the soap and candles manufactured.

Think of the immense labor!

And Marie received but little help from her mistress, who, as the months and years passed, shifted more and more of this burden upon her already overtasked servant.

But Marie Serafinne, helpless and friendless in her circumstances, meek and patient in her temper, never complained.

What, indeed, were the trials of her present hard servitude to the agonies she had once suffered and outlived?

And she never smiled. The memory of her sorrows lay too heavy on her heart. Her present life was ruined, and of her future life she never thought.

She lived and labored a grave, sad, silent woman, a mystery to all, even to those who were in daily communication with her.

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The Berger people were not very intelligent, not very much given to thinking or speaking of any other subject than such as related to money-making or money-saving; but even they, in the course of time, had come to the conclusion that the whole of Marie Serafinne's life, before she arrived among them—a life of which she never spoke—was a secret that she did not care to tell.

Nor did they care to inquire. She was too useful, indeed, too necessary to them, to make it politic to question too closely into her past.

If there were any secrets in her life that rendered her more helpless and timid, more patient in labor and humble in demands, why, so much the better for them. She would work all the harder, and for less money.

And so, as years passed, they put more and more work upon her, and paid her less and less for it.

For long years she bore her increasing burdens bravely. She arose at four o'clock every morning, two hours before any other member of the family stirred, and she worked incessantly until ten o'clock at night, and sometimes even until twelve midnight. She never got more than six hours' sleep, and often not more than four; but so great was her fatigue at the end of every day's hard work, that, as soon as she dropped upon her bed each night, she fell instantly into a profound and dreamless sleep, that, in its depth, was like a temporary death. Each morning she awoke from this state with a start and shudder, and a great dread of the day's burden to be instantly taken up and borne through eighteen or twenty hours of painful, profitless, thankless labor, and she would rather have closed her eyes, and fallen into the sleep of death, than have roused and goaded her weary, aching body to the agony of new exertion, for which she was growing more and more unfit and incapable. But

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the law of necessity was upon her, and each day, with a greater effort, she conquered her weakness and pain,

"And took up her burden of life again."

Did her mistress notice her failing health and strength?

Be sure she did; but only with anxiety on the subject of her own interests, and not at all on that of the girl's sufferings. And whenever she would observe Marie looking unusually pale and weary, and moving with unusual languor and slowness, she would say, hardly:

"I'm afraid you ain't strong enough to do my work."

This acted upon the failing and fainting woman as it was meant to act, as a sharp lash to a jaded mare, stinging her to fresh exertions.

It contained a covert threat, understood, and meant to be understood, by Marie—a threat of dismissal, to her old life of homeless, solitary wandering about the country. Sooner than brave this fate again, poor Marie would work until she should drop and die at her work.

CHAPTER X.

WONDERS AT WITCH ELMS.

THE end drew near. When Marie Serafinne had been working out this worse than penal servitude for more than ten weary years, it happened that during the eleventh winter, an extremely severe one, she took a deep cold that fell upon her lungs.

Though very ill, she did not dare to keep her bed. She knew full well that her hard task-mistress would neither tolerate an idle woman, nor be burdened with a sick one.

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So every morning, after a night of coughing, fever and restlessness, followed by a heavy perspiration, she would rise, weakened and dripping wet, and dress in her cold and fireless attic, and go shivering down stairs to light the kitchen fire and cook the breakfast. And she would keep at work through her prostration in the morning and her fever in the afternoon and evening.

Of course she grew worse and worse. And notwithstanding her best efforts, her work went behind hand.

It was now late in December, and the Christmas Holidays were at hand, when the married daughters, the sons-in-law and the grandchildren of the family were coming home for a visit.

And there was so much extra cleansing and cooking to be done that the work was almost doubled.

It was during this trying week preceding Christmas, that Marie very nearly succumbed to her weakness.

One afternoon when the last batch of pies was put into the oven, Marie dropped exhausted into her chair, and nearly fainted.

Her hard task-mistress applied the moral spur immediately.

"I'll tell you what, Marie, if you can't do better than this, you must find another place, and I must find another servant!"

Marie's thin cheek, an instant before flushed deeply with the fire of hectic fever, now grew pale as ashes, as she faltered:

"I will try—indeed I will try."

And she staggered to her feet and went to work again.

"Now mind you, Marie! I will give you till New Years. If you don't do better between this and then, you go," said her mistress.

"I will do my very best, ma'am, indeed I—" began the

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poor girl, but a violent fit of coughing stopped her words and nearly choked her breath.

And she kept her promise so well, that it was nearly twelve o'clock at night when she stopped work, and crept up to her hard bed in the cold attic.

Exhausted as she was, she could not sleep. She was too anxious, feverish and restless, and the season was too full of heart-breaking associations.

It was now only two days till Christmas. And on this night, twelve weary years before, her child had been born and strangled in Cliff Cottage!

That memory alone without fever, cough and care, was enough to have kept her awake all night.

She rolled and tossed from side to side, and called on the Lord to pity and forgive and help her.

Towards morning a feeling of utter exhaustion, a faintness unto death, came over her; yet the hour being so near daylight, she feared to yield herself to sleep, lest she should not wake early enough to rise and get the breakfast ready. But battling with this overpowering drowsiness was like battling with death. There could be but one issue. She soon fell into a deep and dreamless sleep like temporary annihilation.

Some hours later she awoke suddenly, and found the morning sun shining full into her face!

A great terror seized her, exaggerated by her own low nervous condition. She heard the family stirring. She knew that they would all be downstairs soon for their breakfast. And *she* had done nothing! Not even made the fire to boil the kettle. And she reflected, as she started up, and began to hurry on her scant clothing, on all that she had to do, at this late hour! Bread to make, hot for breakfast, bacon to cut and fry, eggs to beat up into omelettes, potatoes to bake, rice to boil. All this, that should have

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been begun two hours sooner, to do now, and the family ready to come down to the breakfast that they supposed to be smoking hot and ready for them.

Shuddering with sickening fear as much as with the bitter cold, she went downstairs.

Passing down through the middle passage, she heard the young men walking about in their rooms evidently ready to come down. And they were always as hungry and as cross as famished wolves.

Ah! for the poor, sick, friendless woman! She expected no lighter punishment than to be sent angrily away from the house, to her homeless wandering in search of a home, in this bitter winter weather!

So, wishing for death to deliver her from the ills of life, she went into the kitchen.

How great was her astonishment, and how much greater her terror at what she beheld.

There was a fine fire glowing in the great cooking stove and heating all the large kitchen. On the top of the stove a large pot of coffee was boiling and filling the room with its fragrance; two large sauce-pans, one filled with rice and one with potatoes, were steaming in company; a great pan of fried bacon and eggs was covered over to be kept warm, and a huge pan of hot rolls completed the bill of fare ready for breakfast.

Even the table was nearly set in the kitchen, and not a spoon or a fork missing! All was quite ready and not a soul to be seen!

Marie Serafinne sat down in dismay.

"The mistress has done it all herself," she said, in despair, "she is tired of talking to me and bearing with me, and now she means to act on her threat, and to turn me out of doors. Well, I—I cannot say a word! I have nothing to say! If I could only die!"

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Her miserable mourning was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Berger and several of the men.

Marie Serafinne looked up timidly to read her fate in her mistress's face.

But Mrs. Berger was looking around the kitchen in smiling approval.

"Well, Marie," she began, "you have got before hand with your work this morning. And you did it by getting up an hour earlier. I heard you bustling about down here before daylight. Now if you would always be so smart I wouldn't want a better girl!——Come! put the breakfast on the table," she added, taking up the steaming coffee-pot and setting it upon the the board.

Marie Serafinne looked at her mistress in consternation. Was Mrs. Berger making game of her?

Marie did not know, and she was too much frightened to enquire. She placed the hot dishes on the table, and stood silently waiting while the large family gathered around it and sat down.

"You were up so early, Marie, and you have done so much work this morning that you must want *your* breakfast too. Sit down now with us and take it. When you really are smart I like to reward you," said Mrs. Berger still smiling.

This was a very unusual favor, and Marie, wondering more and more what her mistress could possibly mean, sat down, and took the cup of coffee that Mrs. Berger passed out for her.

Was all this a mockery?" she asked herself. Would Mrs. Berger presently turn on her and send her from the house? Marie did not know. She was thoroughly mystified. But she was very hungry, like all consumptives. And so, notwithstanding her mortification and anxiety, she ate a good substantial breakfast, and felt better and stronger for it.

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After breakfast the men dispersed to their field work, and the mistress harnessed her pony to her little wagon, and went off to the village of Peakville to make some purchases, leaving Marie to do all the house-work alone.

"I shouldn't wonder if she was going there to get another girl before she sends me away. If she is, I wish she would tell me, so I might know what to depend on," said the poor woman to herself. And, timid as she was, she braced herself to ask the question:

"Mrs. Berger, are you going to send me away?" she faintly inquired, as her mistress was about stepping into the wagon.

"No, Marie; not if you do as well as you have done this morning, I shan't send you away; but if you go lazing about the house, on account of sickness, I shall have to do it, because I don't keep a hospital, you know," answered Mrs. Berger, as she took she reins and started her pony.

Marie went back into the kitchen, less frightened but more mystified than ever.

Who had done her work that morning?

That was the question that perplexed her beyond all possibility of settlement.

However, there was a great deal of work yet to do. There was breakfast to clear away, dinner to put on to cook, and the beds to make up.

And strange to say, she felt almost strong enough to do it without fatigue.

She soon restored the kitchen to order, put on a ham to boil, and a piece of beef to roast, regulated the fire, and then went up-stairs to make up eleven beds, and clean all the rooms.

By the time she had finished the last bed and the last room, she felt very tired.

But she went down into the kitchen and washed the

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vegetables and put them on, and set the pies on the top of the stove to warm, and then laid the cloth for dinner.

Finally, she sprinkled down some clothes to iron, and then she dropped into a chair to rest while watching the pot boil.

The family all came in to dinner. It was quite ready for them; and Mrs. Berger's good humor continued.

After dinner, the men went out to their work again, and Mrs. Berger prepared to go into her sitting-room and sew, to complete a new dress for herself, to be worn at Christmas.

"Marie," she said, as soon as you have washed up the dinner dishes, I want you to make some doughnuts and jumbles for supper; and you must have some hot biscuits and rice waffles, and hash some of that cold beef and ham together for a relish. And mind, be as smart as you were this morning. Do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered the poor woman.

And as soon as her mistress had left the kitchen, Marie Serafinne recommenced her endless task.

She had felt stronger this day than any day for the last twelve months; but as it drew near night, her strength began to fail, and by the time she placed the well-cooked supper on the table, she felt almost ready to faint.

Mrs. Berger praised the cooking, but did not notice the pallor and weakness of the cook.

As she arose from the supper table, she said:

"I am going to finish my alpaca dress, Marie, so you must get along the best way you can without me this evening. After you have washed up the dishes, and scoured the kitchen floor and the dresser, I want you to iron those things you sprinkled down. It will take you till late, but you know the work must be done; and if you want to stay here, you must do it."

"Yes, ma'am," meekly replied the poor woman.

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And as her mistress left the room, Marie attempted to rise and go about her work. But she was more prostrated than she knew. As she tried once more to stand up, an overpowering faintness and drowsiness came upon her, and relaxed her limbs and weighed down her eyelids, so that she sank back in her chair, and fell into a deep and dreamless sleep of some hours' duration.

She was wakened at length by the loud voice of her mistress, calling from the next room—

"Marie! Marie! haven't you got through there yet? It's after twelve o'clock, and I have just finished my dress, and I'm going to bed! and you ought to be through with your work, too, by this time. Now hurry! because you know you have got to be up very early in the morning."

"Yes, ma'am," mechanically answered the poor woman, slowly waking up from her profound sleep to the alarming consciousness that she had slept ever since supper time, and had done none of the work that had been given her to do! Twelve, midnight, and she had not washed the dishes, nor scoured the kitchen, nor ironed the clothes that had been sprinkled down. She had not even lighted the kitchen lamp!

It was sunset when she had been overtaken by sleep, and now it was midnight, and the kitchen was as dark as pitch, but for the glowing of the fire through the crevices of the stove.

"Marie, are you through?" called her mistress again.

"No, ma'am; but I will get through as quick as ever I can," answered the girl, groping about in the dark for the box of matches to light the lamp, and trembling lest her mistress should come in and find the evening work not even begun.

"Well, then, hurry. I'm going up now! So you must mind and put out all the lights, and cover up the fire, and

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fasten up the kitchen, before you come up to bed. Do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Marie, as at length she succeeded in finding the box of matches.

She listened for a minute, until she heard Mrs. Berger going up-stairs, and then she struck the match and lighted the lamp, and looked about.

Heaven and earth! What was this?

The supper-table, as if by magic, was cleared off and set aside. The dishes were washed and put away in the glass corner cupboard. The kitchen floor and dresser were scoured white. And every copper and tin on the dresser shone brightly as gold and silver; and every shirt was ironed and hung upon the clothes-horse to air.

Marie Serafinne pressed her hands before her eyes, and then removed them and looked again.

The work was done, and done well! This was no dream or vision. It was a stubborn fact. Marie Serafinne had nothing to do but to put out the lamp and go to bed!

"What does it all mean?" she said to herself.

"*Who does my work for me?*"

In great bewilderment she extinguished the light and went up to her attic to pray and to go to rest.

She felt so greatly refreshed by her long, deep sleep in the kitchen, that she scarcely felt the need of any more sleep that night. Yet, as soon as she touched her pillow, she slept again, and slept well.

As on the previous morning, she was waked up by the first beams of the rising sun shining on her face. As before, she started up in a panic on finding that she had overslept herself. She hurried down stairs, and into the kitchen.

Wonder upon wonders!

As on the morning previous, all the work was done. The kitchen was clean, the table was set, the breakfast was cooked and smoking on the stove, ready to be dished.

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Marie Serafinne sank down in her chair, so overwhelmed with perplexity, that she felt as if she would lose her reason.

Who had done her work?

The unanswerable question almost crazed her brain. She had heard of household spirits, called "Brownies," who were said to make themselves very useful in domestic labor; but these she had considered as the creations of imagination only. Now she caught herself inquiring:

"Can it be a 'Brownie' that helps me?"

And immediately, in alarm, she exclaimed:

"I *am* going crazy, or I never should think of such a thing!"

The entrance of the family recalled her to practical duties. She put the breakfast on the table, and prepared to wait on those who sat down. But again she was invited with unusual kindness to sit down and partake of the meal with them.

And with silent gratitude she availed herself of the privilege.

This was Christmas eve. And upon this day all the married daughters, with their husbands and children, were expected to arrive. And in the course of the day they came, one party after another.

And the work for that day was quadrupled.

But Marie Serafinne found strength to do all that was required of her; or if her strength flagged when she happened to be at work in a room by herself, she would be overpowered by drowsiness, and after a restful sleep of several hours, she would wake to find her work all done!

By degrees she reconciled herself to this most mysterious help; and her health and strength visibly improved, and consequently, to her mistress's great approbation, her usefulness increased.

"She only wanted rousing! If I had indulged that girl's

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laziness, she would have moped herself into a consumption, sure enough. Now see how well she is!" said Mrs. Berger to her oldest married daughter, as they sat at their sewing one afternoon early in January.

But little did either mother or daughter suspect but that Marie Serafinne did all that vast amouut of labor with her own hands!

Marie Serafinne, since the days of her darkest misfortunes, had always been a very silent woman. Now, she was even more silent than ever before. She brooded over the inexplicable mystery of her life.

"*Who did her work?*"

When her unfinished task dropped from her fainting hands, *who took it up and completed it for her?*

She could not even surmise. She had ascertained, beyond all question, that no member of the family did. She had tested the matter by searching the room and then locking herself in it alone, on more than one occasion, when she had fallen asleep, slept an hour or more, and waked up to find her work all done.

No, it was no member of the family.

Who was it then?

She would have given her life to know.

The Christmas holidays passed, the married daughters, with their juveniles, left their father's house for their own. And "Witch Elms" returned to its former comparative quiet.

And still, though now there was not so much occasion for help, Marie Serafinne found it. And she grew better and younger and happier every day. But one thing troubled her —anxiety to solve the supernatural mystery of her life.

The winter passed away.

And the spring came, bringing a strange sense of renovated life to the poor servant at Witch Elm's.

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Every one noticed now, how very pretty she was growing.

Will Berger, the youngest of the boys, just growing up into manhood, and ten years younger than Marie Serafinne, took the fancy to fall in love with her, and he did it. But instead of asking Marie for herself, he asked his mother for her.

This proposal did not strike the German woman as it does us. True, Marie Serafinne was only a servant, and ten years older than her suitor, and without a dollar in the world. But then she was very pretty and lady-like, and had a power of work in her that would be money in the pocket of a laboring farmer. And besides, if Marie was ever to be married, as such a fair woman was apt to be, it would be better for them that she should marry one of their own lads, and remain at home to work for them, than that she should marry a stranger and go away, taking all her usefulness with her.

So the German mother told her son that he was welcome to marry Marie Serafinne, on condition that they should both remain on the farm and work for the family as before.

The boy consented to this proposal, and went off in a strikingly forward, practical way in search of Marie. He found her "in the soapsuds" busy with the family washing, and he asked her plainly to marry him.

She stared in mute astonishment a full minute, and then flatly refused.

He went off with his story of disappointment to his mother.

And she told him not to despair, but to have patience, and he might win his sweetheart after all.

Meantime summer waned into autumn, and autumn faded into winter. Christmas holidays were again approaching, and all the married daughters, with their families, were coming to pay their annual visit to their parents at "Witch Elms."

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Again the work at the farm-house was doubled, and quadrupled as Christmas day drew near.

But this additional labor made no difference to Marie Serafinne, who received mysterious help according to her need. She had no trouble but the constant longing desire to know who her secret helper could be.

There was one night, in every year, that was very terrible to the poor woman. This was the night of Christmas Eve, the anniversary of the birth and death of her child. It was on the eleventh anniversary of this tragedy that her mysterious helper had first came.

A year had rolled around since then, and her helper had never failed her. She had grown accustomed to the secret supernatural aid, but had not become reconciled to her ignorance of the identity of the agent.

"*Who does my work, when my own arm fails?*" she asked herself many times, and asked in vain.

"If I could only see, hear, feel, or even dimly perceive, my helper!" she would sigh, and sigh to no purpose.

The year had rolled around again. The twelfth anniversary of the birth and death of her child, and the second anniversary of the coming of her supernatural helper was at hand.

Marie Serafinne, the last one about the house to retire, crept up to her attic and went to bed.

But on this night she could not sleep. On this anniversary she never could. She lay thinking of the piteous fate of her little babe, born and dead in one night, twelve years before! Whether it was that her nerves were unusually weak, or her mind unusually morbid, I do not know; but she lay and wept for pity.

Then a strange thing happened to her—a soft, light hand, soft and light as a rose leaf touched her forehead and passed down over her face. The touch stilled and awed, but did not frighten her.

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"*Who is it?*" she whispered faintly.

There was no answer, but the light hand passed softly to and fro over her face.

"*Who is it?*" she asked again in a voice faint with fear.

A soft face bent down to her and touched her.

"*Who is it?*" she gasped in almost dying tones.

Then answered a low, tender, almost inaudible voice:

"*Wake up. Wake up.*"

"*I am awake. Who is it? Is it you, my Helper?*" she breathed as if she were breathing her last.

Then came the mysterious voice again, low, tender, infinitely compassionate.

"*What is the matter? Wake up.*"

She tried to speak again; but her breath was almost gone; her heart had almost ceased to beat. With a supernatural effort she whispered her last question:

"Who are you? Who are you?"

Then came the final answer, low, sweet, sad, as the softest note of the Eolian harp:

"*The child you bore in Pine Cliffs, a dozen years ago.*"

* * * * * * * * *

They called her mad. Her mania was harmless enough, but they were afraid of her. Mad people were very uncertain. Sometimes they broke out very dangerously, or fatally, and cut throats, and set houses on fire. And so they cast about for some means of securing this woman who told them that she was helped every day in her work by her spirit child.

They dared not turn her out of doors now. She might come back some night and burn down the house over their heads.

Nor could they send her to prison, for she had committed no offence.

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So they cast about for some legal method of restraining her, and mean time they watched her very closely.

They detected nothing in her, unusual, except a tendency to sleep walking. They found that she often arose in the night and accomplished great feats of labor while in a state of sonambulency, but when taxed in the morning with her nightly performances, she would firmly deny that she had ever stirred out of her bed, and as firmly maintain that her spirit child had done the work.

On this ground they charged her with insanity, and lived in constant fear of her doing them some fatal injury, and they watched her day and night, and studied how they should rid themselves of her with safety.

At length it occurred to Carl Berger to write to the only person Marie Serafinne had ever referred to as a friend—namely, Mr. Ishmael Worth, of Richmond.

Mr. Berger wrote a letter and posted it himself.

The letter was answered by Ishmael Worth in person.

He came down to the farm and expressed much interest in the Marie Serafinne, whom he had never forgotten, but whom he always remembered as the most interesting client he had ever been called upon to defend.

He told the Bergers nothing of her trial at Pine Cliffs, but he called himself her friend, and asked to see her.

She was sent into him.

The meeting between Marie and the benefactor who had saved her life, was very affecting.

Marie Serafinne wept and kissed his hands and would have kissed the soles of his shoes, if he would have permitted it.

He asked her about herself, and she told him of her long wanderings and of her finding a home at length at Witch Elms, of the hard work that had worn her almost to death until the last year, when her spirit child had helped

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her, adding in relation to this last astounding information—"I know you will think I am crazy, Mr. Worth, for indeed I should have thought so, two years ago, of any one who should have told me such a thing of themselves, but indeed I am not crazy, Mr. Worth. And I know that my child is now a maiden beautiful and strong, who lives in the spirit world, but comes daily to help me with my hard work in this!

"Have you ever seen her? inquired Mr. Worth, humoring her fancy.

"No, never seen her! but I have heard her sweet voice and felt her soft hand, and more than all, *I have perceived her presence* through some sense that I do not myself understand and cannot therefore describe," she answered firmly.

Ishmael Worth did not dispute her words. He fell into deep thought. He was sufficiently interested in this case to consent to remain twenty-four hours in the farm house to attend to it.

Later on the same evening, while Marie Serafinne was in the kitchen preparing supper, he had an interview with Mr. and Mrs. Berger, in their common sitting-room. He told them that their young friend was probably a somnambulist who did not understand her own case, a condition which would account rationally for everything that was otherwise inexplicable in her case; that her mind was certainly in an abnormal condition and that she required special medical treatment. He would recommend her removal to the "Good Samaritan Asylum for the Insane," and would himself undertake to persuade her to go there, where also, he would cheerfully defray all the expenses of her treatment.

And thus it was arranged through the benevolence of Ishmael Worth, that poor Marie Serafinne entered as a first class patient the famous Asylum of the Good Samaritan.

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There was, however, a secret known to Ishmael Worth, regarding his poor protegée, that he did not care to confide either to the Berger family or to Marie Serafinne herself. For he could not tell the Berger family without bringing to light and exposing all Marie Serafinne's early sorrows and humiliations; and he could not tell Marie herself without inflicting upon her bitter grief and regret. The secret was this—that her husband had turned up, six months after her departure from Pine Cliffs, where he heard with horror and amazement of her trial for the murder of her own infant child. He learned farther that though she had been acquitted by the jury, she had been actually driven from her native village by the force of public reprobation! He then sought far and wide for news of his lost wife, but found none.

He at length went to Richmond to confer with the noble and humane counsel who had gratuitously defended her.

But Ishmael Worth was as much shocked as was Talbot himself at hearing of Marie's flight from Pine Cliffs. He could give no information of the fugitive; but he offered every assistance in his power towards tracing her.

In the presence of the man stricken with grief and remorse, Ishmael Worth forbore to express the detestation he had felt for the heartless desertion which had plunged the poor young wife into such unutterable horrors.

And soon he felt glad of his forbearance, when Talbot, in a voice broken down by sorrow, explained the reason of his apparent abandonment of his wife.

He had left her, he said, in a fit of boyish anger, because she refused to leave her selfish and grasping old grandam, to go with him to his own home in the city.

But when he reached his home his short lived anger was succeeded by compunctions and grief, and he wrote an affectionate letter to Marie. But he never got an answer to

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that letter, which of course was never received by Marie Serafinne. After waiting a week, he wrote a second letter; but before there was time to hope for an answer to that, he received a letter from Leeds, in England, summoning him to the death bed of his father, who was sinking to the grave with a lingering disease. He wrote a third letter, apprising his wife of the necessity of his sudden voyage, and promising to return and claim her as soon as he possibly could get away.

He went to England and to the city of Leeds, where his father was a wealthy manufacturer.

He was detained there many weeks in attendance on the death bed of his only surviving parent, and even after having closed his father's eyes and laid his body in the grave, he was detained many weeks longer in settling up the vast estate to which he was the sole heir.

He had no taste for the business at which his father had made a fortune, so he sold it out to a good company, and with the proceeds of the sale he returned to this country a very wealthy man, to invest his money and to claim his wife.

The dreadful news of her trial for infanticide met and nearly killed him. In leaving her, he had not had the faintest suspicion that she was likely to become a mother. How overwhelming then was the horrible information that she had borne a child, and had been tried for its murder, and that she had fled from her native village, pursued by the reprobation of the whole community!

"See here, Mr. Worth," he had said, in conclusion—

"If you blame me without measure, for all the woe my carelessness has caused, you will do right. But, if you think me now remorseless, look at my hair. I am twenty-three years old. When I came back from the old country I had not a gray hair in my head. Look at it now!"

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His hair was, indeed, half gray, and his face was that of a care-worn, grief-bowed, middle-aged man!

"I pity you from the bottom of my heart. But we must not lose our time in idle regrets. We must try to find your wife," said Ishmael Worth earnestly.

And they did try to find her. They advertised widely, offering large rewards for any information respecting her. But Marie Serafinne, buried in the lonely farm house among the mountains of the northwest corner of Virginia, where no traveller ever called and no newspaper ever came, could not be found by advertisement.

At length, Mr. Talbot started on a tour of search in person. He began at Pine Cliffs and traced her to Wendover, but there he lost the clue, and never found it again.

At the end of three years he reappeared at Mr. Worth's office in Richmond. He had given up the search in despair, and was going to Italy to try and divert his thoughts from remorse that was deranging his mind, by studying the different schools of art at Rome.

He took leave of Mr. Worth, and embarked by the next outward bound steamer. Since that, eleven years had passed, during which Ishmael Worth had heard nothing further from Talbot. He did not even know if the artist was then living; and in fact, from Talbot's long silence, Mr. Worth rather inclined to the belief that he was dead.

Such was the explanation that Ishmael Worth gave to the physician in charge of the asylum, at the time of his placing Marie Serafinne under his care; but which he withheld from Marie herself, lest it should only bring her sorrow and regret, until he would by writing to our consuls abroad, seek and find some definite news of Talbot's fate.

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CHAPTER XI.

BACK TO LIFE AND LOVE.

"And this is all?" I inquired, as the doctor finished his story.

"Yes; for she remains precisely in the same state in which she was when she entered the institution; and her circumstances and prospects are the same.

"Mr. Worth has written, I believe, to every American minister and every consul in Europe, Asia, and Africa, without obtaining any news of the present whereabouts of the artist Talbot. He is still pursuing his investigations, but with little hope of success. The last heard of Talbot was, that he had spent a winter, eleven years ago, in Rome, and had left in the spring for a tour in Switzerland. There all trace of him was lost."

"But she is happy," I said, with a sigh of relief.

"Yes; her hallucination makes her happy," he answered.

It was after ten o'clock, and I got up and thanked Dr. Abbott for his story, and bade him good-night.

I looked in at the nursery, on my way to my room, to see what had kept my cousin Nellie away from the drawing-room all the evening. I found her still engaged with her teething baby, to whom the doctor was just administering some simple medicine. I bade them good-night also, and went on to my room to go to bed and dream of Marie Serafinne.

The next morning every trace of the night-storm had disappeared.

The sky was perfectly clear; the air, keen and cold.

It was good Christmas weather, and Christmas was drawing near.

I joined the family at breakfast; and after breakfast, at

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my own request, I was permitted to make a visit to Marie Serafinne, attended by young Doctor Abbott.

We found Marie sitting by the window of her room, looking out over the wintry sea.

She silently extended her hands to us, and her face was so radiant with happiness, that the young doctor exclaimed:

"Why, Marie, you look as if you were delighted to see us."

"I am. I have had much good news."

"Ah! indeed! What news have you had, Marie, and who brought it to you?" inquired the doctor, humoring her, as if she had been a baby.

Marie Serafinne's voice sank to a low tone, as she answered:

My child brought me the news. Before I was well awake this morning, I heard her sweet voice close to my ear. She said to me, "Do you know you will be married soon? *I* do."

"So you are to be married, Marie? It must be to me, then, for I am the only young man who ever comes to see you. Are you going to marry *me*, Marie? inquired the young doctor.

She looked at him in grave surprise for a minute, and then answered, gently:

"No, Dr. Abbott; of course not. There is only one in the world I can possibly marry, and that one is not you."

"I am very sorry," said the young man, laughing good-humoredly, as he arose to attend me from the room.

In the corridor outside we met Dr. Hamilton, who was hurrying toward us in considerable agitation.

"Have you seen Marie Serafinne this morning?" he hastily inquired.

"We have just left her," answered Dr. Abbott.

"How is she?"

"Not quite so well this morning. A little excited. Thinks she has had a fresh communication from her child."

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"Ah! ah! I am sorry to hear that! especially just now. The fact is, Mr. Worth is down-stairs, and with him a stranger, who has come to see Marie Serafinne."

"Stop!" said I, breathlessly; a stranger to see Marie Serafinne?" You don't mean to say that he is—he is—"

"Her missing husband? Yes, that is just exactly who he is. But I must see Marie Serafinne myself before I can permit her to be excited by such a visit," answered the doctor, as he went past us, and entered Marie's room.

We waited anxiously in the corridor for his return.

At the end of ten minutes he came out with a look of astonishment on his face.

"Would you believe it? She was prepared for this visit! She received me smilingly, told me she knew what I had come to announce, that her child had told her about it! So you see I had nothing to do but to ask her when she would receive Mr. Talbot. She answered, with delight, that she would receive him now!"

"And are you going to take him up to her room?" rather anxiously inquired Dr. Abbott.

"Yes, immediately," answered the elder physician, as he preceded us down stairs.

We all went into the drawing-room together, where we found Mr. Worth and the stranger in conversation with my cousin, Eleanor.

Mr. Worth I had seen before, and so I greeted him as an old acquaintance. He introduced his companion, Mr. Talbot.

And I curtsied to a tall, spare, grey-haired man really but thirty-seven years of age, but looking fifty, and very unlike the raven-haired, dark-eyed young Adonis of fourteen years ago, who had fascinated the little beauty of Cliff Cottage nearly to her destruction.

We had scarcely exchanged the usual words of greeting

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when Dr. Hamilton invited Mr. Talbot to walk up stairs with him, and they left the room together.

Mr. Worth remained with us.

So none of us saw the meeting between the long severed husband and wife. But we afterwards heard something about it. We heard that Dr. Hamilton had left Mr. Talbot at the door of his wife's room, and that the artist had entered that room alone.

She was expecting him, and she received him with calm delight.

But he was quite overcome by the sight of her, and by the remembrance of the terrible suffering he had brought upon her. And when he would have humbled himself at her feet, and implored her pardon for the great wrongs he had done her, and besought her to listen to his explanation of his apparent abandonment, she prevented him by gently replying that she was well assured he had never been in fault, and that she needed to hear no defence from his lips.

The next day Mr. Talbot removed his beautiful wife from the asylum. Mr. Worth accompanied them as far as New York, whence they embarked for Liverpool, because Mr. Talbot had determined to fix their future residence in England, where the terrible story of Marie Serafinne's early life was unknown.

* * * * * *

Some years have passed since their settlement in London. I have heard of Mrs. Talbot recently as a spirit medium of great power. She shows no signs of mental derangement, unless it be her persistent belief that she is in constant communication with her spirit-child. But if that belief is a proof of insanity, there are about half a million of lunatics at large in the United States, holding seances, exhibiting signs and wonders, and calling themselves Modern Spiritualists.

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KRISS KRINGLE.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was Christmas morning. The sun was shining brightly on the new-fallen snow. It was just cold enough to freeze. The sleigh-bells were ringing merrily. The children were having a gay time, skating and coasting, and playing tricks on passers-by.

Hunting for some new amusement, they spied, coming slowly and cautiously down the street, an old man. One of the boys whispered: "Drop some torpedoes on the pavement, and let Old Sime step on them. Won't it be jolly to see him skipping and jumping!"

"Oh, Eugene! you better not. It might hurt him badly. I'd rather not make fun out of old folks," answered one of Eugene's companions.

"Oh, fudge! You have not a bit of spunk, and talk just like a girl. I'll do it, sure."

A few more moments, and the poor old man came near, stepping on the torpedoes, started back, let go of his stick, and fell forward on the bricks. He lay so still, the boys feared they had killed him.

Another eye besides theirs witnessed the accident and its cause. A young girl stood in the bay window of the mansion before which the old man had fallen; another instant and she came running down the marble steps, and, unmindful of her costly attire, the rich silk that fell in heavy folds about her form, she sank down beside the old man, exclaiming:

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"For shame, boys! Come, Eugene, and help me raise him. Nay, he must be carried. Go bring Brown here."

A moment or two after, Eugene returned, followed by a large, strong-looking man, who, in obedience to the girl's command, raised and bore to the house the inanimate form of the poor old stranger.

"Gently, gently, Brown! Place him on the lounge," she said.

Restoratives were applied. Tenderly he was cared for; and, after a short time, the kind girl's efforts were successful. The old man opened his eyes, and looked inquiringly into her face. She explained the accident, and was holding a glass of wine to his lips, when a servant came in the room, bearing on a silver waiter a card. She looked at it and said:

"Tell Mr. Grainger I will be up very soon. Ask mamma to entertain him."

Fifteen minutes passed, and still she lingered with the suffering man. He was lame, and the fall had occasioned such severe pain to the afflicted limb that he had fainted. It was impossible for him to walk at all, just then.

A rustle of silken robes, and Mrs. Cameron glided into the room, and stood looking with perfect amazement on the scene before her. Kneeling beside the lounge, alternately bathing the face and placing wine to the lips of the miserable old man, was her daughter.

"Florence!—who?—what is the meaning of this?" she asked.

The gentle girl explained, and her mother said:

"One of the servants could have attended to him. If he is able to be moved now, you had better send word to the proper authorities, and have him carried to his home, or the alms-house."

"But, mamma, *we* are the proper ones to attend him.

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Eugene and his companions are accountable for his suffering."

The old man said something in a low, feeble voice, and Florence's ear was bent close to catch the words.

"He will go home," he says. "Well, you must wait a little longer, and I will have the carriage—"

"A carriage! If you please, Florence, send Brown to procure one," Mrs. Cameron said. As she turned to leave the room, she continued: "Mr. Grainger will feel flattered by your conduct."

"Send him here, mamma. I know he will think I'm doing right."

A few moments more, and Carl Grainger came into the room. Florence's sweet, bright face, that had been raised to greet him, was suddenly clouded. She saw that she had mistaken her lover—for, with an expression of contempt, which he could not, or cared not to hide, he looked on the suffering man. Scarce had Mr. Grainger passed the compliments of the day, when again the door opened, and another young man entered. He was not strikingly handsome, like the other, but his was the face of one that children love to linger near, women confide in, and men trust.

"Excuse me, but I have permission," he said. "Mrs. Cameron told me you were entertaining your guests here."

Turning to greet Mr. Grainger, the young man saw the sufferer on the lounge.

"Who have you here? Are you hurt, sir?" he said, going up to the side of the old man and taking his hand.

Briefly Florence told of his fall; and the look of admiration, nay, almost adoration, which beamed in William Hartley's eyes as they sought hers, ought to have been the balm to entirely heal the wound caused by Carl Grainger's look. But it was not, just then, for Florence had thought more of the handsome Carl than any of the other young men who

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visited the house. She was dreadfully disappointed to *know* him so different from her thoughts.

The old man signified his desire to go; and when Brown returned with a carriage, William Hartley, with almost womanly gentleness, assisted him in, and urged that he might accompany him home. An approving look from Florence, and he jumped in, closed the door, and ordered the driver to the street and number directed.

"God bless you! You are a good child. I shall never forget this day. Perhaps I'll come to see you again some time," the old man said, when leaving.

The same contemptuous expression was again on Carl's face, and he said, sneeringly:

"Quite a distinguished acquisition to Miss Cameron's list of acquaintances!"

A deep flush mantled her fair brow, but she deigned no word of reply. Carl Grainger saw he had been indiscreet, to say the least, and endeavored, by putting forth his most fascinating powers, to cast away the cloud that had gathered on the face usually so bright. Carl's attempts were fruitless. But when an hour had passed, and William Hartley returned, then, to his great chagrin, he saw a softer light glow in her dark eyes, and her lips wreathed with smiles that he had failed to draw forth.

That night Carl Grainger, determined to know his fate, asked Florence to be his wife, and, to her parents' great disappointment, she kindly but firmly said she "could not love him."

He was not what she had believed him, and her heart fled, affrighted. She dared not trust it to his keeping. William Hartley caught it in the rebound. Florence had always a warm regard for him, that might have long before ripened into true love. But the fascinating Carl had stepped in, and, for the time, made a deep impression on the trusting

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girl. To her he was so devoted, gentle, and she believed him noble and good. That Christmas-day the mask had fallen, and she knew him as he really was. William Hartley, seeing the change in Florence's manners, gained hope. Renewing his endeavors to win the sweet girl's love, he was soon confident of success, and a few weeks after the dismissal of Carl Grainger, Florence was his promised wife.

"Foolish girl! Do you not know that, besides his own fortune, Mr. Grainger is the only heir of an old uncle, who is fabulously rich?" said Mrs. Cameron.

Florence's father's disappointment was as keen as his wife's, for he felt his foundation trembling, and knew before long it must fall. And so it was: before another year had passed the stately mansion was no longer his. He was almost penniless. But he was a true, loving father, and would not barter his child's heart for gold.

And so, when William Hartley won Florence, he took her not from a home of luxury, but one as humble as his own. Years rolled by, bringing with them joy and sorrow, until six had passed. During the last one clouds had gathered, swift and dark, over William Hartley and his loved ones; and so on Christmas morning, six years after the one when the strange old man was helped by Florence, they were absolutely destitute.

"I wonder what has become of that old man?" said William, during the day. "I called a few days after I took him home, to inquire how he was getting on, but he had gone from that place."

"Do you know, William, to that old man's sufferings you are indebted for your wife? That day I saw the difference between you and Carl Grainger. His heartlessness frightened me, and I fled to you, and grew calm and happy," said Florence, while a beautiful flush spread over her face, chasing away the care-worn look of a few moments before.

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"You fled to poverty, toil, suffering. Oh! my darling, I hoped to have sheltered you from such."

"I fled from worse. Come, cheer up, all will be well. I did not tell you, the last time I was out, I saw Grainger very much intoxicated. He is living now entirely on his expectations."

"Mamma, mamma! Kriss Kringle's coming! See! See! Hurra! Old Kriss liked to have forgotten us, I guess!" cried little Willie, shouting and clapping his hands.

Florence arose to look out, when a knock sounded on the door; opening which, she beheld standing before her the old man of whom she had just been speaking.

"Come in! I am glad to see you! Where have you been this long time? And how did you find us?" Florence asked, taking his hand and drawing him in.

"I found very easily what I had never *lost*. I've thought of you often, but chose to come to-day. It is a good time to come," answered the old man.

"Come! sit down here," said William, getting up and offering his own comfortable chair.

"Wait a bit. If I sit down, I don't want to get up soon. Better know first how long I can stay," answered the old man, still standing.

"As long as you like. We are poor, very poor, but if you want a home with us, we will not send you forth. Sit down," answered William.

"The same! unchanged!" murmured the stranger.

"What shall we call you?" asked Florence.

"Kriss Kringle! The children called me so. Let them continue. And—you may say Uncle, if you prefer," he said.

A comical expression was on his face, smiles continued to play about his thin lips, and he seemed very happy.

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When Florence went out to prepare the frugal dinner, the old man called the children, and listened to their lisping voices. William was watching, very much amused, when the old man's words were whispered, and little Willie, seeming to understand, lowered his tone, and the heads of the old and the young were close together, at some mysterious plotting.

The father's amusement was soon changed to the greatest amazement when, soon after, as Florence came back, Willie ran up, exclaiming:

"Christmas gift for mamma and papa too! Kriss Kringle sent them to you!"

It was only a little roll of paper. Opening which they found, told in words never plainer, "No more poverty! no more toiling!" Many thousands of dollars they held in their hands.

They could not speak at first. But after a while, when they poured forth their thanks, Kriss Kringle said:

"Your home is mine! you and yours are mine! All I have is for you! You won it six years ago, both of you. And that day, you had another friend with you. I knew him by name before; I learned his nature then. I heard his remark when I was going out. Ha! ha! He lost something then, didn't he? Eh?"

Florence and William thought the old man was very shrewd to have read the hearts of all, that Christmas-day. But he meant not what they thought. They knew it in after years.

"Go, make our children happy!" he urged. "And, my good child, take this," handing her more money, "and make the poor old folks you meet, and the little children who are looking longingly in at the gay windows, make them happy too."

Oh, what a joyous Christmas it was!

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For five years the old man dwelt with them, and then he sank calmly to sleep, loving hearts and gentle hands soothing him.

And then, from a lawyer of high standing, came the startling information that William Hartley and Florence were the only heirs to all the immense wealth of old Mark Grainger. Then, too, it was, they knew that Carl's heartlessness, and rude and unkind speech had wrecked all his prospects of ever possessing his uncle's wealth. He knew it, too, when the news reached him. In the will there was but one request: "Make the old folks and the children happy," it was. They follow his bidding. Every Christmas-day finds them doing the work they love so well.

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A NEW YEAR'S SURPRISE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was New-year's morn. Andrew Foster was up much earlier than usual; in truth, he might as well have remained up during the night, for, although his head rested on a downy pillow, sleep never visited him during those long, last hours of the old year, nor the first of the infant successor. At the best of times, when a man's or woman's heart is free from the burden of a disapproving conscience, there is something deeply impressive about "old-year's night." As we watch, passing, passing so swiftly, dying out, those last moments, how many a heart is filled with vain regrets! But there is another chance—a better time, we say: the morrow we will begin anew, make amends for the past, to him or her. Yet, O! if, with the passing year, that one that we might have made happier has gone too—gone beyond recall—then ours are ceaseless regrets.

It was not thus, however, with Andrew Foster. The particular one whose happiness he had marred still was with him. Daily, he saw the face, once so bright and beautiful, growing paler; missed the merry, bird-like voice that filled the house with the sweetest music! Yes; although he knew she was fading under his hard, unbending will, he would not bring her back to life—aye; for what is life without love? Constantly during those midnight hours, as vainly he wooed sleep, there would come instead the plaintive little face, with the great beseeching looking eyes. Why would he not yield? Why, because pride said Nay. Could he, Andrew Foster, one of the wealthiest men of the

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city, give his child to one so far beneath her in position, and possessing nothing more than his own good name?

Harry Landon was one of her father's clerks; and Gertie Foster, despite the great gulf between them, grew to love, with all the devotion of her nature, the handsome young man. Every one liked Harry, and respected him; and no one in Andrew Foster's employ possessed more fully his confidence. Many times he would remark to friends, "Landon is a fine fellow! a noble fellow!" But when the truth came to the proud father that this young man had dared to love his child, his opinion must have undergone a great change, for he could scarcely restrain his wrath sufficiently to treat, with any show of decent politeness, Harry Landon, when he came to him in a manly, truthful manner, and told his love.

"Have you presumed to tell Miss Foster this, sir?" asked the indignant father.

"No, sir. I came to you first, scarcely daring to hope you would give me permission to speak. Still, there was a possibility, and I seized it. But I am sure Miss Foster is not ignorant of my feelings—"

"Why, why are you sure, sir?"

"Why? Oh, sir! why do the blind know that the sun is shining, when their whole being is filled with its warmth? Need we tell them what it is? Every true woman knows when she is beloved. Her heart tells her. Oh, sir, I ask you not to give her to me now—not until I can prove my worthiness. But let me speak to her."

"Impossible! I never will consent. 'Tis useless to to say more on the subject. And after this conversation I suppose you well not feel so well contented in your position with our house."

"I was about to ask, sir, if you would give me letters of introduction to some other establishment!"

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"Certainly, certainly, Landon. I will see that you have a position quite as good, to say the least, as your present one. I—I am sorry this has happened. I am your friend in every other way. You must remember and command my services when you wish."

And so the young man and his employer parted.

Days passed until a fortnight had elapsed, and Gertie had not seen Harry Landon. She missed him from the store too, and with her usual straightforward, candid manner, she went to her father and asked:

"Where is Harry Landon, father?"

"He has left us, for a better position at Black's," answered her father, with his eyes still on his paper.

"Why did he leave you, father? I heard you say you were going to do more for him."

Andrew Foster raised his eyes then, and looking sternly into his daughter's, replied:

"He presumed too far on my friendship, and it was desirable to both him and myself that he should seek employment elsewhere."

Her beautiful, truthful eyes were still gazing into his with an eager, anxious expression. She sunk down on a stool at his feet, leaned her head caressingly against him a moment, and then whispered, with a blush suffusing her pretty, child-like face:

"Father, did he tell you that he loved your daughter? And was it *that* you sent him away for?"

"Yes, Gertie. He might have known I could not listen for a moment to his suit. He is a very worthy young man: but really it was very presuming in him to—"

"Presuming, father, in an honorable, worthy man to love me? I don't think it so. I feel honored by the love of such a one. And, father, he has told you his secret; I will do so too. Although he may never know it, I love Harry Landon."

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There was much said between the father and child, she gently pleading for her love, he chiding and unyielding. A year had gone by since then. Occasionally Gertie would meet Harry Landon on the street. Once they stood side by side at the church door, and Gertie could not resist placing her hand in his, and notwithstanding the probability of Mrs. Grundy's declaring it very unmaidenly, she whispered:

"I know all. And though I may never be yours, I will never wed another."

Harry was nearer happiness, then, than he had dreamed of ever being again. Now that he was assured of her love, her constancy, he would hope, and work on.

As Andrew Foster stood before the window that New Year's morning, looking out on the passers-by, many pleasant looking faces greeted him with a smile, and "Happy New-year, sir."

A moment more, and the room door was thrown open, and his boy, his only one, the youngest of his children, came running up, crying out:

"Happy New-year for papa! See, papa. Eddie's happy. New-year's day, with new clothes, new boots, new everything. I am going to be a *new boy*, too. Gertie says everybody must try to make somebody happy to-day! I am going to make Nellie happy, for I'll stop teasing her. I wish! —Oh, I wish mamma was here." His blue eyes filled with tears and his lips quivered, and in a sorrowful voice he continued: "I wish I had been a new boy when mamma was here."

Was everybody striving to place before him, hold up for his inspection, his harshness? Was every word intended to deal a sure blow? When the little seven year old Eddie spoke of "mamma," Andrew Foster could scarce repress a groan.

She was gone. Two years before she had passed from

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earth. Oh, if she was with him, how different he would be! He had been a good husband, and the gentle wife could not find in him anything to reproach. But *he* knew how much was left undone. How many little loving acts, that make life so doubly sweet, were forgotten then.

Again Eddie's voice sounded in the father's ear.

"Papa, are you going to be a new man to-day? Papa, make *me* happy first with a splendid pair of skates. And Nellie and Gertie must be happy too, papa. Make Gertie be a new girl, please. She won't sing and play with us; she's getting old, I believe."

No argument, no pleading, no matter how earnest, could have made such an impression on Andrew Foster as that child's innocent prattle.

Again the door opened, and Gertie and Nellie were beside him. The kisses were given and received. The father saw his child was striving to be cheerful, and not cast her shadow over him.

He told them all to speak their wish, what he should give them that day. Eddie and Nellie were quick to tell, but Gertie said, with a smile that threatened to be a tear:

"Give me what you choose, father. You give me so much, I have no wish to speak; but—" She hesitated—she almost dared to breathe it forth. No, no; she would not cloud his heart that day. She cast aside the wild hope, and continued: "Bring me what you think I'd like; I trust to your decision."

After breakfast he said:

"You will lay aside your deep mourning to-day, my child, and help me receive my friends. We shall have many, I think."

She promised she would; but her father knew it would be an unpleasant task—that Gertie would much sooner spend the day quietly with her little ones, or in acts of love and mercy.

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The guests were all gone. The tiresome day was nearly over. Gertie had thrown herself wearily into an arm-chair. There was no longer need for dissembling; the forced smiles could die away; she could rest and weep. The children had been made happy. Her father had given all save her the New-year presents. She had not cared for any, but she had held a lingering hope that he might come to her with a word that would break the long silence, that she might plead anew with him.

Andrew Foster had closely watched his child, as she did, with so much dignity and grace, the honors of his elegant establishment. And he saw, through the mask she wore, never so plainly was visible the changes that the last year had wrought in her beautiful face.

When he saw her sink so wearily into the chair, his heart smote him, and he went out quickly. Possibly he feared, should he linger, he might grow weak and relent.

Gertie heard the hall door close, and she knew her father had gone out for the evening, likely.

How long she remained she knew not, dreaming. Not *sleeping* dreams were they. Her mood of depression had taken wings, and she was smiling gently, sweetly. Visions of happier times were before her.

A cautious step approached. She heard it, yet moved not, nor opened her eyes. She wished not to throw off the sweet influence which was over her.

He, her father, bent gently, lovingly over her, and murmured:

"She is sleeping and happy now. Gertie!" he called softly.

"Father, I've not been sleeping," she answered softly.

"I thought you were, and dreaming—"

"I *was* dreaming happy dreams—vain, fleeting visions," she said, her voice filled with sadness.

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"Have you forgotten your New-year's gift I was to bring you, Gertie?" he asked.

"No, sir; I thought *you* had. Have you brought me one?" she asked, forcing a show of interest.

"Yes, little daughter, I have brought it: I have never for a moment ceased to think of it. It has been a subject of much weight. You left it to my decision, and I wished to be sure of pleasing you. Now put your arms around me, and give me a kiss—one of Gertie's old loving caresses—and then go. Look in the library, and find your New-year's gift," her father said, his whole form trembling with emotion.

She was again a child, clinging lovingly about him; forgetting for the time, all but her father's effort to please her. She knew not why it was, but she saw and felt his agitation; and she strove to calm and make him happy.

"Go, go now, darling; you are still my own Gertie."

"Yes, yes, papa, your own Gertie," she said, with another caress.

"Some one will soon rob me of my darling," he said, smiling sadly.

"Not likely, papa," she answered; thinking. "I shall never leave him. Oh! why will he not relent?"

She opened the door, passed through the hall, and entered the library. The father strained his ear to catch the sound of joyous surprise. He hears it. It falls on his ear and sinks into his heart, and he murmured:

"Gone! Mine no longer!"

Seeking her father's gift, she raised her eyes, and there, smiling, standing before her, his arms put forth to welcome her, was Harry Landon.

She could not realize the great joy—it was too much. She dared not accept it yet. And withdrawing herself from his encircling arms, she said:

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"Come, come to father! Can he mean that we shall be happy?"

Kneeling before him, she asked, between tears and smiles:

"Do you mean— Oh, father, speak! Tell me what it is?"

"Gertie's New-year's gift—her father's choice. Have I succeeded in pleasing you, eh, little one?"

"Oh, father! the best, the dearest father that ever a girl possessed! What can we do to make you happy?"

"Why, darling, I am now very happy! It comes very suddenly with my resolve to make others so!" answered Andrew Foster, placing his child's hand in her lover's.

We may give our gifts, of things rich and rare—jewels bright and pure—but the best of all are those of Love, Mercy and Forgiveness. Those should be our "New-year's" gifts.

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FAIRY'S SECRET.

A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Every heart, as God's bright angel,
Can bid some one's sorrow cease;
God has glory when his children
Bring his poor ones joy and peace!"

It was New-Year's eve. A trio of beautiful girls clustered around their father, and told the wish of their heart.

Playfully covering his ears, he bade them speak "one at a time."

Ada, the oldest, a beautiful brunette, looked pleadingly up, and whispered, as if fearing to ask:

"The ring, papa, you know I told you of. Please, papa!"

A low whistle, followed by the remark:

"A moderate boon to ask! Three hundred dollars! Now, Fannie, will you be as considerate? What for you?"

"Please, papa, a watch. Ada had one before she was my age."

"Well, that is not so bad! We'll see. Now, my little fairy, what do you wish? But I know; I heard mamma saying something about the pearls. Am I right?" And the father drew to his side the youngest, the baby of their home—a tiny, fair, frail girl, with a shower of golden ringlets, and soft, loving blue eyes. Although sixteen, she was so very small they dropped her name of Florence, and called her fairy.

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With a beautiful arch look, she asked:

"What will they cost, papa?"

"Not less than a hundred dollars, little one."

"Papa, if you will give me seventy-five to spend myself, I would like it better. Will you?"

"No, papa; don't! I believe she is hoarding up all the money you give her. She will not tell us what she did with her birthday money. She never buys ornaments or anything for herself, but is always borrowing mamma's or mine," exclaimed Ada.

A deep flush mantled Fairy's fair brow. She did not reply to the unkind words, only looked eagerly for her father's reply.

"I will trust her. Sometime she will surprise us with the lot of valuable things she has purchased."

George Harden, the father of the girls, was a man whose wealth had been acquired through his own exertions. By hard work, economy, and perseverance for many years, he was now one of the wealthiest men of the city. Within his own family circle he was liberal. His wife and children were surrounded by every comfort and luxury. But his generosity ended there. In business he was close and exacting. His employés knew that, to their sorrow. The last week of the Old Year several of the clerks had called upon him begging an increase of salary. One in particular had urged his great necessities, telling of an invalid wife and a large family of helpless little ones. George Harden dismissed all with the same answer:—

"I believe the salary paid my employés compares favorably with the other firms in this city. But if it is not so, you are at liberty, sir, to seek elsewhere for better compensation."

Fairy was his favorite child, although he never manifested it when it could possibly be noticed by his other children.

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New-Year's morn brought to each of the daughters the desired gift.

Directly after breakfast, Fairy was off to spend her money, so she said.

At dinner her father asked:

"Well, Fairy, what did you buy?"

She did not speak. Ada and Fannie said simultaneously:

"She will not tell, papa. She says she will not."

"My daughter will tell me, I know, when you are not in hearing. You tease her too much."

After dinner he drew her with him into the library, and sought to gain her secret.

"Please, papa, don't *make* me tell you! I would rather not," she pleaded.

Disappointed and mortified that he had failed to win her confidence, he left her.

In the evening he went with his wife to the opera. The girls preferred to remain at home with some young friends.

The indisposition of Mrs. Harden caused their return at an early hour.

Ada and Fannie were surrounded by a bevy of merry ones; but, "Where is Fairy?" the parents asked.

"She was with us only a few moments before, and must be somewhere near," they said.

But Fairy could not be found; she had gone out; where, no one knew. This strange conduct, with the embarrassment of the morning, caused George Harden to be very anxious. Each servant was questioned closely, but no knowledge gained. One was absent—Maggie the chambermaid, and Fairy's especial favorite.

While still endeavoring to obtain some clue to Fairy's whereabouts, Maggie came in. Mr. Harden observed her closely. He was sure he saw an anxious look in Maggie's eye. In an instant his resolve was taken.

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"Where did you leave Miss Fairy, Maggie? And are you to return for her, or will she have company home?" he asked, as calmly as he could.

Completely taken by surprise, Maggie gave sure evidence of her complicity with Fairy's actions, whatever they might be. She stammered, hesitated, and attempted to deny any knowledge of her absence. Terribly anxious was George Harden. His manner was so stern and determined that Maggie became frightened, and exclaimed:

"Oh! she will never forgive me, if I tell!"

"Come with me! Show me where you left her! No delay. Come!" And he took Maggie by the arm, and opening the door, stepped out. The girl no longer resisted.

She preceded him up town to a retired street, and stopped before a very small, neat-looking house, and sobbed out:

"There! In there!"

The window shutters were open, the inner blinds were drawn down, but the slats were not close, and George Harden could get, through them, a glimpse into the room—parlor, sitting-room, and nursery all combined, it seemed. On a couch, reclined a woman, who bore the unmistakable evidence of severe illness. Three little children were clustering round a table clapping their hands, seeming very happy. By them, untying a large bundle, was a young girl. George Harden saw his child.

A shout from one of the children caused him to gaze more eagerly into the room. A little boy of about seven held up a pair of boots, and shouted with joy, "See what my Fairy has brought me!" he cried out.

And on the father continued to gaze, as his child scattered forth her gifts of comfort, and even luxuries; and then she left the little ones, sank on a stool beside the sick mother, and began talking. No words reached the ears of the listening man; but he knew words cheering, comfort-

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ing, hopeful, she must be speaking, for the sad, weary look vanished from the mother's face, and a pleasant smile was in its place.

A mist was in George Harden's eyes. He pressed them tightly together an instant and then began anew his gazing. He was fascinated, spellbound. There was a conflict raging in the man of money's breast. All was explained then about the spending of his gifts. Her sweet, young face was illumined by an expression of such holy joy, that George Harden's heart was conquered, and echoed the cry which escaped his lips, "My blessed child!"

On and on he gazed, wondering for whom she had been providing thus. Soon, however, he was answered by the entrance, from an inner room, of a man whose features were well known to him.

None other than William Eaton, the clerk who had asked for an increase of pay a few days before.

Quickly the care-worn expression vanished, and a pleasant smile came in its place, as the poor clerk's eyes wandered from one to the other of his loved ones, and then rested on the young girl, the good fairy who had made them all so happy.

George Harden strained his ear to catch the low words the grateful man was speaking to his child, but in vain. A moment after, however, he could imagine what they were; for in her sweet, distinct voice Fairy replied, in tones sufficiently loud to reach her father's ear:

"Oh, no; you mistake. Papa will not censure! He does not think. It is his *mind*, not *heart*, that is at fault."

George Harden moved hastily from the window. Motioning Maggie to follow a few yards from the house, he stopped, and said to the wondering girl:

"You will now do just what Miss Fairy told you, Maggie, without mentioning one word with regard to my actions this

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evening. You understand? You can relieve your mind, however, of any apprehensions of my disapproval. If you always do as my daughter wishes, you will do right, and always please me."

An hour after, George Harden sat in his library waiting his Fairy's coming; yes, his good Fairy, who had so unconsciously bestowed on him such a blessed gift that New-Year's evening. Something that he had lost for many long years she had helped him to find again—his better nature long, long ago, that had had been crowded out by thoughts of gold and gain. Dear little Fairy! so unselfish, so quiet, so unknown in her blessed acts!

How he longed, then, for her coming! There had been a great dread in the father's heart, and he had been so unjust to his child—ungrateful and disobedient he had thought her.

A few weeks previous to the opening of our story, George Harden felt it his duty to inflict a severe blow to little Fairy's visions of love and happiness. Fairy had a lover, of course, and one her father disapproved, and bade her banish from her heart and home.

Fairy's lover, Willis Mordaunt, was a poor artist, and stood very much in the way of suitors of high position and great wealth. This was his only fault, in George Harden's opinion, but quite sufficient to place an insurmountable barrier between Willis and his lady love.

The mystery attending Fairy's actions had induced her father to fear they were in some way connected with her lover; perhaps an intended elopement. How those few past hours had convinced him of her purity and goodness!

"How I have tried her young heart, and how patiently she has borne it! I will make her as happy to-night as she has made others; aye, and her father too!"

A few moments more, and Fairy was beside him. There

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was an anxious, inquiring look in her soft blue eye, when she found her father awaiting her, and learned he had returned so early in the evening; but the gentle, loving way he welcomed her coming convinced her she had nothing to fear.

"Little Fairy," he said, "your father craves his New-Year's boon. Have you no gift for him who gives so much to you?"

"Oh, papa, what can I give that you have not?" she answered.

"You can give that for which I would give all my worldly goods to have—my daughter's confidence and perfect trust! Will you give me this, my child?"

She looked long, earnestly, eagerly into his eyes.

"I will! I will!" she cried; and was clasped closely to his breast.

"First, my Fairy, your father will begin with this new year by trying to make you happy. What shall be the wish for him to grant? Speak without fear the dearest wish—the one nearest your heart."

Joy danced in her eye; bright smiles wreathed her rosy lips; and kneeling at his feet, she looked eagerly into his face, and whispered:

"Papa, think—can you mean it? May Willis—" She stopped. The glad light faded from her eyes; the sweet face grew thoughtful and sad; and pressing her little hands over her heart, as if to still its wild emotions, she remained a moment in contest with her heart and its pleadings.

"Papa, I had commenced to plead for the happiness of two, but that wish must give place to another which will make many happy. Father, William Eaton and his family are in sore distress. Be more liberal. Increase his pay, and the others in your employment. Do, my father!"

"My darling child! And is the happiness of others so

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dear to you? Can you be happy in theirs? Yes, I know 'tis even so. Look up, little Fairy! Another boon you must claim. For this was determined upon an hour ago." And then he told her all, and blessed the Fairy whose loving nature had won him to the path of true happiness.

And then little Fairy listened gladly to the whispering of her heart, and answered its pleading by her wish for Willis's recall.

Many hearts were gladdened the next day by the unexpected and liberal advance of pay: and when the clerks of George Harden returned to their homes that evening, they united with their loved ones in blessings on the good and just man. In after days his course was marked by continual acts of mercy; and he did not hesitate to say he "was guided by Fairy's influence."

And she, the good Fairy, was as happy as she deserved to be—happy in her father's love and perfect confidence, happy in her lover's devotion, happy in the possession of an approving conscience. Her jewels were of the purest lustre, the rarest worth.

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A JOYOUS THANKSGIVING.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"For the heart grows rich in giving,
All its wealth is living grain;
Seeds that mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain."

"How dreadfully provoking! What shall I do?' Of all days, she is the most needed now! Thanksgiving eve and the cook sending word 'she cannot come to-day,' just as though it was a matter of no consequence. I declare, servants are the torments of a woman's life!" said Isabel Allworth, whose tone and features expressed the utmost annoyance.

"Why, my dear, I thought your cook was a prize. I'm sure I've heard you say so. What is the trouble now?" asked Mr. Allworth.

"Yes, at one time I did think so. But lately she has been growing like all the rest. Late in the morning; wanting to 'slip home' during the day; forgetful and neglectful. I should have sent her off ten days ago if I had thought I could do any better. She has always some frivolous excuse. A sick child, mother, or some one; and now, this morning, she has sent me word she 'cannot possibly come.' You can tell her I shall not require her services any longer. I shall provide myself with some one else in her place," concluded Mrs. Allworth, turning to the messenger waiting.

"Perhaps she has some very forcible reason," suggested Mr. Allworth. "What does she say?"

"Somebody living with her being very ill. I'll start,

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directly after breakfast, and try to find another. I have to go down town to make some charitable visits. There are a few poor women I want to make comfortable to-morrow."

"Very likely you will make one very uncomfortable, Isabel. You may be hasty about this matter. Do not worry about the dinner to-morrow. Your chamber-maid and the dining-room servant, I think, can manage the vegetables; the meats, game, and dessert, I will order from a restaurant."

"Yes, well, do; it will relieve me so much. But I am determined to make her feel the loss of such a home and twelve dollars a month," answered Isabel, with a determined expression on her face.

Isabel Allworth was widely known for her charities. Her name always headed the list for any foreign or domestic mission. She could well afford to be liberal. Her husband was a wealthy banker, and never questioned his wife's demands for money, frequent and large as they were.

Mark Allworth was very proud of his beautiful wife, who was twenty years younger than himself. Isabel had married him because he was rich. But she was a faithful wife, and grateful always for the love and gold her husband lavished on her.

Isabel's family were of old and noble blood. You might easily detect that when you gazed on her. Proudly erect her head, with its truly regal brow, the short, curling upper lip, the straight and beautifully chiselled nose, all told of whom she came. A proud race! But they were poor, very poor—Isabel, her younger sister, and the widowed mother. It was a hard struggle for them to keep up an appearance of gentility. How Isabel rebelled against the fate that made it so. With her tastes of elegance and refinement, it was an irksome life. So when Mark Allworth asked her to be his, she gladly accepted his name and the position his

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wealth could give her. Not so Mabel, her sister. Love was life to her. And so she formed the acquaintance, how they knew not, of a young actor, and, to the severe mortification of her family, eloped with him. This happened about the time of Isabel's marriage. The mother never recovered the shock; her health failed, and soon she passed from earth.

Isabel never forgave Mabel. She had seen her but once since her marriage—the day of her mother's funeral—and then Mabel came to her, and with a heart almost crushed with the thought that her conduct had terribly wounded the spirit, if not really ended the life of her mother, she would have thrown her arms around her, and begged for one word of sympathy and love; but the cold bitter look of Isabel told too plainly Mabel had been cast entirely from her sister's heart.

Five years had passed since. She had no knowledge of Mabel, except that she was a widow somewhere in that great city. The death of her husband she had seen announced in the papers.

No children had been given to Isabel, or perhaps her heart would have grown softer. This was a great disappointment to her husband, she well knew, and her own nature craved the blessings denied.

Once, during the month previous to the opening of our story, she had dreamed of sitting alone in her room, surrounded by all her elegance. Her thoughts had wandered back to her childhood and the little sister then so dear. She felt some one pulling her hand. A soft, gentle, tiny pressure and effort it was. She glanced down, and at her side was a beautiful little child, a miniature of herself. Her heart filled with love. The little cherub was her own, she felt. She yearned to clasp it to her bosom, and put forth her arms, when off flew the little one, and in a sweet voice called, "Come, come with me, mamma!" Springing up,

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she followed, through long streets, until they reached a miserable house, and then the child disappeared through the door. She hesitated to follow it, when again the sweet voice called to her. The door opened, and revealed Mabel. The little guide had brought her to her sister, and was then nestling in Mabel's arms. Isabel sprang forward to take it, when closer it clung, saying:

"Open your heart, mamma; make room for both, and then I'll come to you."

She sprang forward, exclaiming:

"My darling, I must have you!" And awoke to find it all a dream. But her heart had yearned so much ever since, for the little child of that dream.

Seated in her elegant carriage, Isabel Allworth directed her coachman to drive to the different places where she intended to dispense her charities. All were at length visited, save an old blind woman.

"Alex, do you know where Mrs. Brown lives?" Isabel asked of the coachman.

"Oh, yes, madam! And most likely there you will be able to find another cook. Mrs. Brown lives in a tenement house; and there are many women there needing employment," answered the man.

Isabel was soon with the blind woman, making her heart glad by the many comforts she had brought.

"Will I be likely to find a good cook here, Mrs. Brown?" she asked.

"I don't know, but will find out for you." She knocked with her cane on the wall of the room, and soon was answered by the appearance of a girl.

"She can tell you," said the blind woman.

Isabel repeated her inquiry, and the girl replied:

"Oh, yes, madam. There is a woman, a nice smart one, who is just out of a place. I know she will want another,

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for she is dreadfully poor, and has to take care of a poor old mother, and a lady, a real lady, who was so ill this morning we all thought her dying, and so Hannah Hines could not leave the lady; and just for that her mistress discharged her. There are some very hard-hearted people in this world, lady," said the girl, with a sorrowful look, as she shook her head.

Isabel's face had flushed quickly when she heard the woman's name, the very one she had discharged that morning.

"You say she is so very poor?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Oh, yes, madam; dreadfully poor. She feels the loss of such a good home very much. And the beautiful lady that's with her cried so much when the boy came back with the lady's message, that 'she did not want Hannah any more.' Poor things! It is bad with us all, but then we are not so miserable as Hannah, two people pulling her back all the time. She tried hard to be cheerful, but I could see how bad she felt this morning. Come, lady, I will show you her room."

Isabel hesitated a moment. Her heart was chiding her for the sorrow she had given the poor woman. Oh, if she had only thought how many trials a poor servant may have! How the tardiness of her coming may have been caused by long, weary, sleepless hours by the bedside of suffering old age or infancy. Oh, why could she not have been more considerate! But she would repair the past by future kindness.

She followed the girl, who, after passing many doors, pointed to one, saying:

"In there you will find her."

Isabel thanked and dismissed the girl, and then stopped for a moment outside the partially opened door. She glanced

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in. There was an old curtain fixed up, to break the wind a little. The place seemed very familiar to Isabel, yet she was sure she had never been there before.

Isabel glanced in again, then, through a little opening in the curtain. More earnestly she gazed. There came a wild look in her eye; she turned deathly pale, and caught the door for support.

"My sister! Oh God! And here in this misery!" she murmured. And then quickly her dream flashed through her mind.

It was all just as she had seen it then; but where was the little child? A guardian angel, perhaps, guiding her heart to mercy, forgiveness, and love.

Propped up in a miserable old chair was Mabel, so worn, so pale and sad-looking, Isabel could scarcely recognize her. Near her, ministering to her, was Hannah Hines. In another part of the room sat an old woman, bowed with age and suffering.

Poor Hannah! well might she have seemed to Isabel both forgetful and negligent, so much she was thinking of those suffering ones at home who needed her so much.

She could not go in there then. Hastily retracing her steps, she entered her carriage, and ordered to be driven quickly home.

"A boon, my husband! a boon for the Thanksgiving!"

"Speak, love! It is already granted," answered Mark Allworth, as Isabel sank to a seat beside him.

And then she told him all—all the bitterness of her spirit for so long; all the injustice she had done the noble, suffering Hannah; and then all the regret that filled her heart. She wanted to atone—to give them great joy for the sorrow she had caused them that day.

"My wife, all I possess is yours. Share it with whom you please."

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"Here? May I have Mabel here?" she asked, eagerly.

"Certainly; and I thank heaven my wife is all right at last. We will have a thanksgiving, from the inmost heart of more than one, in our home to-morrow, darling."

Isabel called her maid, who was a quick, bright girl. Ten minutes conversation with her made her understand perfectly what she was to do. She was then dispatched with a kind note from Isabel, asking Hannah to return with the maid.

Two hours more, and Isabel sat waiting the coming of Hannah. Soon she was with her. There was a bright, joyous light in Isabel's eyes, a sweet, gentle smile on her lips, that Hannah had never seen before. What could have happened to make her look thus? Most frequently before, the look that greeted the cook was fretful.

"Sit down, Hannah," she said so kindly, that the poor woman's wonder increased.

"Hannah, I was hasty this morning; I do not wish you to leave me. Do you not think you might stay all the time with me? I mean, bring your mother too?"

A bright light shone for a moment in Hannah's eye, but soon faded away as she said, "I think not, madam; I have another that needs my care."

"Come, Hannah! See what a comfortable room I can give you! Come!" And Isabel drew the hesitating woman to a room in the back building, opened the door, and pushed her in.

Seated in a comfortable easy-chair in the cosy, warm room, was Hannah's mother, looking very happy, and very much at home.

The old woman chuckled gleefully when her daughter gazed wildly from Isabel to her mother, and placing her hands to her head, murmured:

"Am I dreaming!"

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"No, no; 'tis no dream. Will you stay now, Hannah?"

"I cannot—I cannot desert *her!*" answered the poor woman, scarcely able to realize she was really awake.

"Come, Hannah, some one is calling you!" And again Isabel drew the bewildered woman along with her, and stopped before a front room in the upper story.

"Hannah!" called a feeble voice.

Through the door with a bound she went, and sank beneath the one she would never desert.

With her arms around her sister, Isabel told the still bewildered woman the events of that day, and learned from her that she had been a servant in the family of Mabel's husband, that she was very much attached to him, and after his death still stayed with Mabel, sharing her poverty and attending to her when her health failed so much she could not provide for herself.

She had seen Mrs. Allworth's advertisement for a cook, and sought the situation so as to obtain money to provide for the invalid and her own mother.

But how had Isabel managed to get them in her own home without her knowledge, Hannah could not understand.

It was easily explained. The maid had been directed to stop at several places returning home—a half a dozen things to attend to—taking at least two hours; thus giving Isabel ample time to drive to Hannah's home, wrap up both invalids in the comfortable shawls she had provided, place them in the carriage, and reach home before the arrival of Hannah.

Oh, that truly was a joyous Thanksgiving! Old age was comforted, hearts so long estranged were again united, and the noble-hearted Hannah was rewarded for all her years of unselfishness and devotion.

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Surrounded with love and every comfort, Mabel grew well and strong.

Isabel had no more troubles about her cook. She truly was a prize, and many more might be so if their minds were relieved about their own cares.

Before the next Thanksgiving Isabel's heart had ceased its yearning. The little child of her dream nestled in her bosom, clasped closely to her heart, then worthy to possess it. Isabel is happy, she has so much to be thankful for. And so have many of us; and we may make our day of Thanksgiving not one of forms and words, but of deeds. If not by the scattering forth of worldly goods, by loving, kind, forgiving words—by finding some hearts to make happy.

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EDNA'S WORTH.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

How could we love her? She had caused us such a bitter disappointment. And how could he ever have loved such a pale, strange-looking little witch?—for witch she surely must have been, I thought, to get my brother so bewildered as to fall in love with, and marry her—he, our only boy; so noble, so handsome, and the idol of his sisters; two of us—one widowed, and the other, myself, who gloried in the title of "old maid." Very few sisters, I believe, are perfectly satisfied when their brother has found some one dearer to him than those who have loved him all his life. But I think we should have been, if our choice had been his. And why could it not have been so? Knowing Louise, our beautiful darling, so tall, fair and queenly, how could his heart have wandered elsewhere? In our hearts and minds we had fixed upon her as our brother's wife. Constantly, in our letters, we kept her goodness and beauty ever before him. She was worthy of him; as gifted as our Wilbur, she could appreciate work with him, we thought. Louise was with us when his letter came, bidding us to welcome his bride. I saw the surprise and disappointed look on her sweet face. Not that she had learned to love him—oh, no! But she felt a deep interest in the brother of her dearest friends, which might, if nurtured, have grown into what we had hoped.

Wilbur wrote:

"I shall bring her to you—my poor, stricken little girl! in deep sorrow. She would be alone in the world now, save for me. We were married beside her dying father's couch.

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Scarcely a wife before she was entirely an orphan, with neither sister nor brother. I have promised her so much love from you that she will not feel the loss of a mother or sisters, while I must fill the place of all the others—father, brother, husband."

We felt certain then, after reading the letter, how it was he came to marry her—not for love, but pity. Yes, we fully decided upon that, which did not make us feel any better about it. In fact, we felt that our brother had been taken in, sacrificed, and so on.

We went about our preparations for their coming; furnished anew his room; made it pretty and cheerful. But our hearts were not in our work as they would have been if another was to share it with him.

The night of their coming we had no company to receive them, thinking she would prefer it so. Only Louise was with us. Handsomer than ever was Wilbur. He sprang from the carriage and came quickly up the steps to where we were standing on the porch, clasped first one and then the other of us to his heart, and then back again to the carriage, lifted out the "wee thing," and bore her in his arms until he placed her beside us, saying:

"There, little bird, go nestle away in the hearts waiting for you until I come back."

He went to attend to removing the baggage. She turned, as if about to run back after him. Then, with a quivering lip, she raised her eyes to us—a shy, frightened look, first at me, then toward sister; then there came a softer light into her wild-looking eyes, and she crept into the arms extended to welcome her. Anna was a mother; her heart was not so hard as mine. A little child, a girl of her own, had taught her to feel for every other mother's child, I think. I clasped her hand and pressed my lips to hers, and tried, for Wilbur's sake, to seem loving and kind; but fear she felt

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the want of heart in my greeting, child though she was—scarce seventeen, he told us. She was wise enough to know which of her husband's sisters would be her friend, when first she saw us. We carried her to the parlor and introduced Louise to her. I saw the child's dark face brighten up when the beautiful girl greeted her in such a tender, loving manner. An instant after she cried, with quivering lips:

"Please call me Edna, not Mrs. Mason; that seems so strange. And my heart yearns so to have some one call me Edna. I have not heard it since he—papa—" Here she stopped, and turned her face away. She was weeping, I knew. Wilbur came back just then, and after greeting Louise, said:

"Come, little bird; sisters will show you somewhere where you can trim your feathers a little."

He called her pet names only. Anna went with them, but returned a few moments after, in time to hear my remark:

"Positively a little fright!"

And to reply:

"No, no: not so bad as that. But no beauty, surely."

"What could have made him marry her but pity?" said I.

"We see her in a most unfavorable light. Her great sorrow will wear upon her good looks sadly. Besides, she is tired by her journey. She has glorious eyes. I can see what it was that won his love; she has the winning manner of a petted child. I hope you will love her," said Louise.

We were still talking of her when they returned to the parlor.

I took a malicious delight in comparing the two, and thinking Wilbur could not fail to note the difference between his wife and the one that might have been; she all beauty

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and grace; the other— Well, well, I've said enough about her looks.

Later in the evening, when Louise had drawn Edna apart from us, to look over a portfolio of Wilbur's first drawings— I have not told you he was an artist, of whose pictures the world was loud in praise—he lowered his voice, and said, looking toward his wife:

"She is not herself now. Naturally she is bright, happy, and very charming. You must help me chase away her sadness, and win back her smiles. You will scarce think that she can be very pretty."

I am sure I could not. After a moment's pause, he said:

"Louise is more beautiful, if possible, than ever."

Ah, I thought he could not help comparing them.

It was not long before she was "more like herself," as Wilbur said. Her grief had been so wild and passionate, that naturally it must soon wear itself out. The color came back to her dark cheeks, an additional brightness to her eyes, and often I could hear her voice caroling snatches of bird-like songs. Yes, she was growing merry enough—his love was so perfect; filling the place of father, brother and husband, as he had said it should.

Anna was growing very fond of her, and declared her very, very pretty. Although I had to admit she was no longer a fright, I would not see her beauty, or try to love her. My devotion to Louise precluded anything of that kind.

She grew to be very popular with Wilbur's friends; the young men declaring her charming, while the old ones were quite foolish, I thought, in their praises of her. Wilbur's particular friend, a young physician of rapidly growing favor, who had long been an admirer of Louise, came often with her to our home.

Before Wilbur's marriage, Doctor Wilton had made but

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little progress in his wooing; but since, Louise had seemed more favorably inclined toward him. He was passionately fond of music, and had a very fine voice. Louise, although a brilliant performer, could not sing at all; but she would play the accompaniment, while Edna's and the Doctor's voices blended so beautifully together. Thus hours were spent—every one, I thought, that he could possibly spare from his practice. Wilbur enjoyed their music so much, seeming never to tire of it.

I was very wicked, I know. I really believed her artful and designing. The child-like, artless manner I thought assumed. I saw how happy she was, those hours spent in the Doctor's society; and it made me dislike her the more for finding pleasure anywhere but with her husband. I coaxed myself into believing she was trying to bewitch Louise's lover, as she had Wilbur. Many times I've heard her say:

"I wish Louise and the Doctor would come. I miss them so much. Isn't he a splendid man, Wilbur?"

I do not think a doubt of her ever entered his mind until I put it there. I began with a look, or a little word opportunely dropped. Once I remember the expression of pain that came over his features when I said:

"Dr. Wilton admires Edna very much. How well their voices are suited! I think, Wilbur, if he had known her before her marriage, you would have had a very formidable rival."

Another time I ventured a little too far. He was in his studio, busy painting. I heard her singing, and thinking it a good chance, I went in. After admiring his work a few moments, I said:

"Has Edna not a wonderfully powerful voice for such a little body?"

He stopped, listened a little while, and said:

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"That is a beautiful piece she is singing now."

"Yes," I replied, "it is her favorite, or rather the Doctor's, which is about the same."

He looked at me sternly a moment, and then said:

"You have never loved Edna, Julia. But be careful that you are not trying to plant thorns that may prick *you* more severely than any one else."

Aye, his words were prophetic. How deeply I repented my wickedness, no one but He who knoweth every heart can ever imagine. Yet, at that time, I hated her the more for being the cause of the first rebuke that ever came to me from my brother's lips; notwithstanding which I continued my course, more cautiously though. In Louise's ear I put a word—not often, but very effective—until I managed to build up a wall of ice between her and my brother's wife.

Wilbur's heart was troubled. Edna felt it, and was hurt that he did not tell her why. She grew reserved, crushing back the loving impulses of her nature. The Doctor's visits ceased with Louise's, and Wilbur feared Edna was sorrowing that he came not.

Wilbur worked night as well as day then—worked to keep from thinking. He was looking miserably. At length Edna declared him really ill, and begged him to cease his work. Her anxiety chased away the reserve she had tried to maintain, and she insisted that he should consult a physician. He would not. She begged then that she might send for his friend Doctor Wilton, and he should talk with him. When she said that, I looked at Wilbur—a look which spoke volumes. She wanted an excuse to have him again near her, I thought, and my eyes told that and more. There came an expression in Wilbur's eyes then I could not read. I knew not if it was defiance toward me, or resignation to her wish or will. And he said:

"Yes; send for Wilton, if it will relieve your mind."

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The Doctor came. They had a long talk. Edna was not present, nor either of us. When he came out of the studio, she met him in the hall. In reply to her inquiries, I heard him say:

"He *must* stop work and rest. He complains of a pricking sensation in his right side and shoulder. I do not like that. It is unfavorable. Still, with rest and care, I think we can bring him round all right."

But he would work on. We were not rich, he said; it was necessary for him to work.

For many weeks indeed, since the reserve in their manner to each other, Edna would spend the hours that were formerly passed in Wilbur's studio, locked in her own room—doing what, I knew not, but believed her sulking.

At length the terrible blow came. With horror I felt how much I had helped to cause it; perhaps was the very instrument that dealt it. Had I not made him unhappy, would he have toiled so hard—striving to banish thought?

She found him lying, apparently lifeless, beside his work. For weeks he lingered, hovering as it were between us and eternity.

She rested not, nor would leave him for an hour. If she slept, it was a moment, now and then, with her head on his pillow, where his slightest movement would arouse her. At last the Doctor told us he would live, but never more to work. His right arm was paralyzed.

I had been growing somewhat less bitter in my feelings toward her during his illness. She had seemed so devoted, so anxious. But when Doctor Wilton said, "but never more to work," a look of unmistakable pleasure was in her eyes. Not a grateful expression, but one more of exultation, power. What could it mean? Had those long weary hours of anxious watching been only fine acting? The old doubts and suspicions came back again, growing daily greater

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and darker. She would meet the Doctor often at the door, and stand for many minutes in earnest, whispered conversation. Once out on the porch, hidden behind the clustering vines, I saw her place her hand on his arm, and looking up into his eyes—her own filled with tears—she said:

"How much longer? Oh, these last two weeks have been more than years to me. And if—oh, if—you have not been deceiving me I may hope—"

"Everything," he answered, interrupting her. And taking her hand in his, he continued: "You will not have many more days to wait, and then I am sure we shall be very happy." And shaking the hand he held, he hurried off.

Now I dare not think back to the terrible thoughts which filled my mind. Wilbur was still very weak. I must not, even by a look, warn him of what I feared. He was very tender and loving to her. But the old doubt still lingered in his heart, and an expression of the deepest sadness came over his face. When one day she heard the well-known step in the hall, and darted out to meet the Doctor, I heard Wilbur murmur, unconscious of my presence:

"Poor child! She is so young. I hoped to make her happy; but I am so grave and quiet, and nearly twice her age. God give me strength to bear it."

I told my thoughts to Anna. She would scarce listen. She would not think her so false. "She was a thoughtless child, and nothing more," she said.

Wilbur seemed so very slow in getting better. Ah, I knew why he cared not to live.

Edna was in a state of feverish excitement, which every hour grew worse. One day I felt the crisis was near. Her cheeks were burning; her eyes glowing with a wilder look than ever; while I knew her ear was strained to catch every sound of coming footsteps. At last she heard the welcome

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sound, and sprang down the steps to meet him. I heard him exclaim, "Joy at last!" and she, "Bless you! O, God will bless you for your goodness to me!" A little talk that I could not hear, and then he walked into the parlor, and she came bounding up stairs again into her husband's room. If she saw me she did not care, she was so wild with delight. Wilbur was sitting in an arm-chair. She threw herself on a stool at his feet, caught his hand, pressing it close to her bosom, and joyfully cried out:

"At last, at last I can tell you. You will doubt us no longer. And forgive me for having a secret from you. I dared not tell, I was so fearful of a failure. See! see! There is no longer need of your working. I shall work for you—for us all. And oh, what a labor of love it will be! See! see!"

And she held before him a paper, pointing with her tiny finger to something on it. He looked at it, then at her, as if he had just awakened from a strange, wild dream. Before he could speak, she drew from her pocket a roll of notes, and thrust them into his hand, saying:

"This is yours, all yours. I am all yours, am I not? And I will have more, much more. Oh, speak to me, Wilbur. Say one little word, please."

"Oh, the unutterable joy that beamed on his wan face then, as he murmured, clasping her to his heart:

"Thank God! You are *all* my own!"

I stole away then—hid myself from their sight. In the next room to the parlor I was when she came down, a little while after, and said to the Doctor:

"Come to him; he knows all. I've told him how much we owe you, our best friend. Come, come! he wants you."

How terribly I had wronged her! Could she ever forgive me? I thought. Yes, she did fully, freely; but can I ever forgive myself?

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Soon we knew all. How those hours, locked in her own room, she had been working for us; writing her pure, beautiful thoughts. To the Doctor she had told her secret, begging his advice and assistance. He had placed her work before those he believed would appreciate and accept it, guarding her secret so closely, for fear of a failure, that it brought trouble between Louise and himself. But all was over then. Louise came, and with her arms around her, pleaded for forgiveness.

Wilbur is resigned to His will; and although he paints no more beautiful pictures on canvas, his themes are given to Edna—those that she, in her charming manner, weaves into romances which are winning for her the brightest laurels, and for us already have gained a happy, luxurious home. How much she gives us! The best of all her gifts is her great love.

She knows how deep and true is my repentance, and is, I think, kinder to me than my sister, if possible. She has given us some one else to love now—a little Wilbur. My life is devoted to him. I love him better than even his father, with a love devoid of selfishness—one purified by experience, suffering and remorse.

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THE MAGIC CRUSE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

For the heart grows rich in giving,
And its wealth is living grain;
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy?
Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden;
God will bear both it and thee.
—GOLDEN GRAIN.

"PLEASE, sir, will you buy some of these pretty things? Watch-cases, pen-wipers, slippers, and pin-cushions? *Do*, sir, please. They are very cheap, and my mother is ill and works so hard," said a little girl, in a pleading, sorrowful voice, to the proprietor of an extensive "gentlemen's furnishing" establishment on Chestnut street, Philadelphia.

"No, I have no need of anything of the kind. Pass on, young one," answered Mr. Pinchem, in a harsh, rough voice.

The little one started toward the door, hesitated, and then went slowly into the street and on her way.

This little waif on the sea of hard, dark waters might be about nine or ten years of age, judging from her size; but the poor little pinched face, with the large sad eyes, had the look of years of sorrow.

She was dressed scrupulously clean, but "in very antique garments." She was proceeding slowly along the sidewalk, gazing in the different stores to see a face which invited her in, but, oh, such are very hard to find in the world of trade.

The child was talking to herself, when a hand was laid on her shoulder, and a pleasant, kind voice said:

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"Stop, little girl, and talk to me, or let me talk to you. I am the runner-boy in the store you were in just now. I felt so sorry for you and your sick mother. I am poor myself, but I ran after you to say I have made an extra dollar to-day, and I'll take what you will give me for it, and may be I could sell some for you. I am often at the houses of the rich with bundles, and I will try to help you, if you say so."

"Oh, thank you, kind, good boy. Give me the dollar; that will help us to-day; and take my basket and try to help us more. Keep what you choose for yourself; I am so tired and disappointed, I do not want to try to sell any more."

"Tell me, little girl, what were you saying when I came up and spoke to you?"

"I was only repeating what I have often heard grandpa say, 'There is no friendship in trade;' and I was wondering if that did not mean, there is no trade friendly to poor folks. I think it must mean that," answered the strange child.

"Now tell me your name, please? Mine is Jacob Truman."

"And mine is Avis Wirth. That means a birdie, grandpa says; but they all call me Avie. I will tell you where we live, and if you can sell those things, you can find time perhaps to come to our house;" and she gave him the street and number, and then added:

"I will ask God to bless the good boy, when I say my prayers to-night. Good-bye; don't forget to try and help us."

Jacob did try, and in two or three days disposed of the contents of the basket, and instead of the dinner hour being spent at home, he told his mother he should be busy that day; and so he went and hunted up his little friend,

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made his returns, and received a new supply, with numberless blessings from the invalid mother and poor crippled grandfather.

Things went on so for several weeks, when one day Jacob went to see after his little protegee, and found that the mother's weary eyes and tired fingers were resting at last. Little Avie had, soon after Jacob's first visit, enlightened him with regard to the family affairs. Her father had gone to Australia gold hunting, and they had heard nothing of him for two years; but some of the men who went out with him had sent word home that he died of the fever on the hospital ship.

When Jacob found Avie sobbing over her mother's cold form, he was sorely troubled. What could he say or do to help her? Amid her sobs she would tell him, that the ladies were going to get her grandpa in the alms-house, and put her in the asylum.

"Oh, Jacob," she pleaded, "do not let them take me from grandpa; I shall die. Please, good Jacob, try to help me in this trouble."

"What did your mother say, Birdie? Did she express no wish about your future welfare?" asked Jacob.

"No. Oh, yes, she did say, 'I leave my poor little bird to God's care. He will provide.' Oh, Jacob, if God would only let *you*, instead of the ladies, take care of me; and sending me away from grandpa too!" sobbed the child.

"I am going now, my poor little dear, and I will try my best to return with some good news for you. I will be back this afternoon."

Jacob first returned to his employer, asked for leave that afternoon, saying he would be back in time to close up the store and take any packages, if necessary.

This gained, he went home, and with a faint heart he told his mother about his holiday to attend the funeral of a

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friend; and then he told, in a touching manner, the story of the poor child; how he first knew her; about the sick mother, and the old grandfather.

Mrs. Truman listened with interest, for she was very proud of her good boy. "He was not like the generality of boys," she would often say to her neighbors.

"You are just like your father was, Jacob—too kind for your own good. Serving friends was his ruin, and brought us where we now are," said Mrs. Truman.

"But, mother dear, *that* virtue helped to carry him where he now is—in heaven, with our little Rosie. Now listen, mother. You know I never go to places of amusement and spend my money like the other boys—not even my extras. I bring *all* to you. Mother, grant me one favor. Go with me to the funeral, and—and bring Avie and her grandfather. We have a spare room, and—"

"Jacob Truman, are you crazy? How on earth could I feed them? Boy, you are wild! Oh, dear, just like his father. Don't say another word, boy!"

"But, mother, I must. I will feed them; and besides, Avie's services will be a full compensation to you for any trouble you may have. Mother, dear, remember the words, 'Be merciful according to thy power.' Think, mother, if your little daughter could speak from heaven, would she not plead for this little one?" Jacob continued his pleading, growing more earnest and eloquent even. At last his end was gained, and mother and son proceeded to the house of sorrow, went to the graveyard, and then returned to be present at the consultation respecting the future of the bereaved ones.

The guardians for the poor had pretty well made up their minds what to do. Avie was seated with her head on her grandfather's knee, sobbing piteously.

Mrs. Truman, thinking it was now the proper time to

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speak, came forward, kindly lifted the orphan child, and laying her hand gently on the old man's shoulder, turned and said:

"Friends, you need not give yourselves any further trouble about this matter. I tell you plainly, this child shall not be taken from her grandfather, nor he from her. They shall both live with me, provided it is agreeable to them, and I shall try and make them as comfortable as where you would put them. At any rate, they will not be grieved by a separation. Jacob, speak to your friends, and tell them who I am."

Jacob was only sixteen, but of a manly look and bearing far beyond his years. He went forward, spoke in a low voice to the old man and child. The former grasped his hand warmly, and blessed him.

Mrs. Truman was introduced; and when grandfather Goodman had gazed earnestly in her face for sometime, he said:

"Stern, but just; a little hard, but a true and earnest face. Come, Birdie, thank the lady. We will go with her."

In a short time they were comfortably fixed in Jacob's home.

Things went on very prosperously for several months. Jacob's pay was increased. Avie made herself very useful; and thus far mother Truman had no cause to regret her good action.

But a long hard winter came on. Jacob fell on the ice, and broke his leg. For months he lay quite helpless. The little earnings were dwindling fast away. Mrs. Truman was very despondent, and did not conceal her feelings from her son. It was bad enough for her to have to look out for her own, without the care of others on her mind. "The end would be they would have all to go to the poor-house together!" she said.

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Jacob tried hard to instill into her mind faith in God's love and care:

"Remember, mother, 'he that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.' Things will be brighter soon."

"Jacob, it grieves my heart to have to say it, but the old man will have to go to the alms-house, and Avie will have to hunt a service place. Things are now as bad as can be—cupboard empty, wood-house clear of even chips and cinders. Better to send them off, than to have them starve and freeze before us."

"No, mother. Wait a little longer. God will provide."

Avie saw and felt this trouble. She watched mother Truman's every expression.

"Grandpa! oh, grandpa, what will we do? No wood or coal—the last is burning now. I can get a little bit of money to buy tea and bread with my knitting-work, but oh, I am so afraid you and Jacob will suffer from the cold!" said Avie, sorrowfully.

"Never fear, Birdie, all will be well. A little suffering will not hurt us, but make us appreciate God's mercy the more. Too much prosperity hardens the heart, and we forget to be grateful. But here, take this." And the old man drew forth a massive gold watch, only valuable for the case and the reminder of better days. "Go pawn it; perhaps we may get it back some day. I know and feel sure this is only a trial for us. Better days are coming. We shall have a plenty and to spare some day. Yes; and I will live to see it."

The little feet flew along the long streets. The desired place was found; and in the shop, wonderful to Avie, a kind face.

The gentlewoman, the proprietor's wife, had in her girlhood known a hard, sad life. She knew sorrow, and felt for the needy.

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The child's beautiful sad face made its impression, and the woman took the watch, gave the ticket, and with it twenty dollars, saying:

"I think that is the most it is worth. I'll keep it for you as long as I live; so you can get it back any time, should you wish."

She bought Avie's knitting, and paid liberally, telling her to bring all she wanted to sell to her, and come to see her often.

With a light heart Avie returned with the welcome news to her grandfather.

Mrs. Truman thought she must be dreaming, or had lost her senses, when Avie came to her, put the roll of notes in her hand, and said:

"Grandpa sent you this to get some wood and coal, and do as you choose with."

"Where did you get it? Twenty dollars! Jacob, make her tell you. I am frightened about it."

"Come here, Birdie! How did grandfather get so much money?" said Jacob, gravely.

"I don't want to tell you; you might feel bad about it," said the child pleadingly.

"Mother feels very anxious. Will you not tell me, Avie? Will you not do as Jacob wishes you?" he asked in a sad voice.

"Yes, oh, yes, if you tell me I must. I will always, so long as I live, do as you wish me in everything. I sold grandpa's watch," answered Avie.

How those grateful, loving words sank into the heart of the youth, and were often recalled with pleasure. Yes, and in years after bade him have faith in her and hope.

Tears were in the eyes of mother and son. Mrs. Truman felt deeply her want of faith, and keenly too, that God had sent her the needful through the hand of those whom, only a few short hours before, she had felt such a burden.

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She was very tender to Avie and the old man for many days, until darkness crept over her life again. Still Jacob felt hopeful. He would not despair. The money was all spent, and hunger and cold were again staring at them.

They were too proud to ask for help. A bright idea struck Avie. She went to her friend at the pawnbroker's, told her story, and was followed home by a boy with a large basket of good things for the invalids; and more than this, the kind woman told her to go to Jacob's Sabbath-school teacher, and let him know the state of things.

Avie went. The kind man had no idea they really were in need. He had visited Jacob often, and carried him delicacies, and then found things always seemingly right. That day Mr. Brightwell made another visit, and talked plainly to Jacob; told him he had money to spare, and would like to loan him as much as was necessary for their use; and he had sufficient confidence in Jacob to say, "Return the amount when you are well again, and can very well spare it."

Jacob and his mother poured forth their thanks, but Mr. Brightwell said:

"Stop, stop, my friends! You must thank this little one for giving me the pleasure of assisting you." And he placed his hand on Avie's bright hair.

"Mother, Birdie must go to school. I have taught her all I know, but she must have more than this. She is far too intelligent and capable to be neglected. We must have her educated as far as our public-school can do it, and that is quite sufficient for her position in life."

"Jacob, impossible! She would need more clothes. And now we must be saving to pay back Mr. Brightwell's money, and she must be doing her embroidery and knitting to help. She can read and write, and that is enough for any common child."

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"Mother, it is not enough, and she is not a common child. I have spoken to Mr. Brightwell, and he is in no hurry. He thinks Avie should be thoroughly educated. She can be a teacher then in our schools, and help you in your old age."

Jacob conquered. Avie's progress in her studies was wonderful, far beyond even Jacob's expectations. The day of reward came, and the joyous child returned home, placed the proofs of her industry and merit before Jacob, and said:

"Are you pleased, Jacob?"

"Very much, my good little student."

"Jacob, you will spoil that child, and make her as vain as can be!" said Mrs. Truman, sharply.

"Oh, no! Please do not think that of me. I only care to please Jacob, and prove to you that I am not wasting my time."

During the next year Mrs. Truman had good cause to bless the little orphan girl. A heavy cold, taken in the fall and neglected, terminated in a severe attack of pneumonia, and for many days her life was despaired of.

Avie nursed her benefactor with the devotion of a grateful heart. When slowly recovering strength, Mrs. Truman became fully conscious of what a little comforter was near her.

Years passed on. Grandfather Goodman still lived, and continued to talk of the "better days coming." Avie was fifteen. Mrs. Truman no longer objected to her going to school. She was first in all her studies, and the next year was promised the position of assistant teacher.

Jacob had long since left Mr. Pinchem, and was bookkeeper for Mr. Brightwell; but his heart was not in his work. He longed for knowledge, and every moment of leisure was devoted to study.

This little family were again prospering. With the severest economy they had paid all old debts. Mrs. Truman often said she was "just getting a peep at day again, it had been dark so long."

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Friends expressed their thoughts freely respecting Jacob's position, saying "it was a shame that a man should have such a pullback; he would never be able to get ahead in life, with such a heavy weight on his young shoulders. But Jacob thought differently. He considered himself quite prosperous, and was contented in making others around him happy.

One day there came to the house a poor lame man—and oh! such a joyous meeting! 'Twas Avie's father returned.

It was a sorrowful sight, however, to see the dreadful disappointment depicted in the grandfather's face. The visions of brighter days had faded. The old man had felt quite sure that his son-in-law would return some day to repay their benefactors, and place his darling little girl in a position worthy of her beauty and talents. There was a hard struggle to submit cheerfully to "the inscrutable will;" but he conquered, and soon became again quite hopeful of yet seeing a brighter sky beyond the present dark clouds.

Jacob again opened his arms and door to the needy; yes, cheerfully bidding him welcome. Avie's father should never want for home or friend while he lived. Mrs. Truman tried her best to hide her misgivings and forebodings of the final winding-up of her family. The "poor-house" was her continual reference and place of destination—in imagination.

The lame man was much away from home—"probably trying to pick up a little work," thought Jacob. And he suggested to him not to tire or worry himself. This poor boy's faith was destined to a severe trial. Now Mr. Brightwell told him that after that month he should not need his services any longer, but would endeavor to help him in any way he could; that he meditated a change in his business.

Trouble comes not singly. The landlord gave them notice to find another house—he had sold that property. The stranger watched closely the faces of mother and son.

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Surely they must show by some expression they felt the burden heavily—two helpless men to care for.

Jacob said, "We will all suffer together, friends, if so it must be, but I will try and weather the storm."

Jacob's last day of employment was at hand. On the morrow he would be without the means of providing for the future. Still he said hopefully, "I have still some little money left, and before that is gone will find something to do. Cheer up, mother, dear."

"Mrs. Truman, will you go to-day to look at a house I think may suit you? The rent will not be much. It belongs to a friend of mine, and he will not be hard on us," said Mr. Wirth.

"Jacob had better go, he knows best; but I will go too."

They started, leaving Avie to stay with her grandpa. On walked the friends down to the most fashionable part of the city, Mr. Wirth saying he would have to call at his friend's and get the key. They stopped before an elegant house, and he rang the bell. A servant came to the door and said:

"The gentleman was not in, but would be very soon, to his dinner. Please walk in."

They were all quite tired, and glad to get out of the heat, and so accepted the kind invitation to be seated in the cool, elegant reception room.

Jacob and his mother were deeply interested, examining the beautiful paintings, when a pleasant voice fell on their ears, saying:

"You wish the key of the house, I believe?"

Jacob turned to find Mr. Wirth, but he was gone; but in the man standing before them they beheld one strangely familiar. The merry, twinkling eye bewildered Jacob.

"Sir—Mr. Wirth, can this be *you?*" said Jacob, in a voice of the greatest surprise.

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"Supposed to be. Cured of lameness, shorn of whiskers, and minus spectacles. Yes, my friends, my benefactors, it is John Wirth, now able to make some little return for all your long kindness. Welcome to your home, if you will receive it as such; and Mrs. Truman, here is the key and deed for the house you have occupied so long. I gave you the notice to leave through the former owner. Now you have a choice. Remain here as my daughter's friend and adviser, or return to your own house. The first we are very anxious to have you do; and I think it will be very lonesome for you there, for I intend to send this young man away from you very soon. Here, my boy, look over these documents."

Jacob could scarcely believe himself awake—he must be dreaming. Before him, in his hand, was a letter from the President of the —— College, saying "they would be prepared and happy to receive Mr. Jacob Truman under their charge," and a receipt for a year's tuition; also a draft for two thousand dollars.

Jacob turned to pour forth his thanks.

"Not a word. You are my boy for the present. Go to your college. Remain as long as you like. Gain all the knowledge you can, and then come and tell me your plans for the future, and you will find that John Wirth can prove his gratitude. Oh, boy, this is the happiest hour of my life. I heard of you while in Australia—of the noble boy in years, but brave in worth and strength of purpose, who divided his little with the orphan and aged. Friends from this city let me know all this, or I should not have rested so easy this long time, away from my child. I felt she was in good hands. How I have worked for this hour!" said John Wirth, in heartfelt tones.

In a few moments more Grandfather Goodman and Avie joined the happy circle. This was a perfect surprise to all, for John Wirth had kept his own counsel.

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Mrs. Truman remained with Avie. Jacob went to his college, and soon proved his great abilities. In three years he received the position of Assistant Professor of Chemistry, to which study he had devoted his principal attention, and now stands before the world celebrated in that science. Avie mastered the various accomplishments, and was quite a belle, not only for her beauty and wealth, but loving disposition. Jacob's remembrance of her childish words gave him courage to ask her if she would repeat them once more, and with them give the promise to be "all the world to him."

Grandfather Goodman lived long years after blessing the union of his darling with "one of the best men living."

Little birds gathered in the home nest, and with bright eyes and merry cooing voices brightened and cheered the old man's life. And then soft loving hands smoothed the aged brow into the last sleep, so beautiful to the faithful.

Mrs. Truman is in her glory; doing good without the constant fear of the poor-house before her eyes; and is often heard to say that "it was Jacob's charity, and unwavering faith through all the greatest adversities, she felt sure, that won for them God's bountiful blessings!"

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JUDGED TOO SOON.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"MONSTROUS depravity! Shameful! Now is not that a sight to discourage any Christian, particularly one that has labored so hard as I have in the temperance cause?" said the worthy Silas Flint; and pointing with his cane, he directed his friend's attention to the opposite side of the street, there to see a boy of about fourteen years, miserably clad, proceeding with very irregular steps, sometimes nearing the curbstone, and then going quite up to the store windows, stopping quite still, and leaning against the buildings, as if for support.

"Is he intoxicated?" inquired Mr. Flint's friend.

"Why, certainly! Do you not see he has a bottle now, peeping from under his jacket? The young vagabond! The work-house is the place for him!"

"He does not look as if he had been drinking rum. He is very pale, and indeed looks quite sick. "Perhaps, now, he is, and we are judging him wrongly. Let us go speak to him, Flint. We can then find out. We may possibly be able to reform him."

"No, we are not judging him wrongly. That bottle is proof positive. It is no use to waste our time talking to him. Besides, it is near five o'clock, and I have to meet the Committee on Foreign Missions. If I had the time, I would find a policeman, and call his attention to that young rascal!"

The friends crossed the street just then, and came very

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close to the boy, who was gazing wistfully into a bakery window. He was very pale, with great mournful gray eyes, around which were dark circles. His thin lips were quite blue, and indeed his whole expression was of great suffering. Silas Flint looked at him with a prejudiced eye and mind. He could see nothing but the bottle. His friend, however, was very doubtful as to the intoxication of the boy; and seeing how wistfully he was gazing in at the bread, cakes and so on, said:

"I do not believe it. He is sick, perhaps. I am going to take him in, and give him something, at any rate."

Just then the boy started off a few steps, reeled, and almost fell; but tightly he clutched his bottle. Several men came along just then, and one exclaimed:

"A young hopeful! Ain't he?"

The charitable feeling in the breast of Mr. Flint's friend, received a check then. He could no longer doubt it was as Mr. Flint said. And that worthy gentleman went on his way, met the "foreign mission workers," subscribed one hundred dollars for that cause, and returned to his home feeling very comfortable, as he considered he had done a Christian duty.

Mr. Flint was a good man in his way. If he saw any suffering he would relieve it, if he could; but he had little faith in anybody or anything. Well, perhaps we should be like him, if we had had his experience. Mr. Flint was a bachelor of forty-five. Twenty years before, he had loved and was engaged to a young girl who supported herself and aged mother by embroidering. The pay was not a living one. Late and early she toiled, until her young life was wearing fast away. Silas was poor then, working as a journeyman. His pay might have kept himself and wife, but the mother would be an encumbrance, an extra mouth to feed; so he dared not marry then. He could not trust to

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Providence for help. But he did trust in Mary. He had perfect faith in her love and constancy.

In the mean time, while Silas was waiting for the old mother to die, or his better days to come, somebody else came to see pretty Mary—one who had money enough to bring the invalid mother wines and delicacies—and so won her heart that she began with whinings and pleadings, and continued for many weeks wondering why Mary would not love and marry the kind young man.

Mary felt her strength growing daily less; and the dreadful thought came, What if she should grow sick? Who would care for her mother; and so the poor girl yielded. And one day when Silas called to tell her of some better luck he had at length, he found his Mary gone—"married," the neighbors told him.

Since then Silas had believed in and trusted no one. In the years that had intervened he had grown in riches, and become quite a leading man in church and State affairs.

A week after the scene we have just related, Silas Flint sat at his abundantly furnished table. A ring at the bell, and the remark from Mrs. Hart, the widowed sister who did the honors of her bachelor brother's establishment:

"John, I think it is a beggar. I saw a boy pass the window. If so, tell the cook to give him his dinner."

Mr. Flint was just leaving the table, and said:

"Stay! I'll go myself."

Opening the door, he found standing on the step the boy he had seen a few days before.

"Please, sir—"

The child's petition was cut short by Silas exclaiming:

"Be off with you! I know you, sir!"

"Oh, sir! My mother—"

"Oh, yes, of course! The same old song, your *mother!* Your *rum!* Why, I vow you've got it now! Be off! I'll

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have you put where you can't get at rum!" exclaimed Silas, his breast filled, as he thought, with righteous indignation.

"Oh, sir, indeed, indeed—"

Slam went the hall door, and the boy tottered off. A few moments after a bright, pretty girl came into the dining-room, and throwing down her music books, said:

"Was there a beggar boy at the door, a moment or two ago?"

"Yes. Why, Katy?" answered her mother.

"Why, he was so miserable looking, and the tears were trickling down his poor pale cheeks. I felt so sorry for him, and gave him all the money I had—only twenty-five cents."

"Yes, and he will go to the first drinking shop and fill his bottle. And your money will do more harm than good," said Uncle Silas.

"Well, perhaps so: but I don't think it, uncle. And if he does, I cannot help it. Better so, than for him to be hungry for bread, and I to refuse him," answered Katy.

A few weeks after this, when Silas Flint was absent from the city, a lady in the neighborhood called on a charitable errand, soliciting Mrs. Hart's and Katy's help in the way of clothes and sewing for the Orphan Asylum. As she was leaving, she remarked:

"By the way, Mrs. Right called on me this morning to obtain help for a case of great destitution in this neighborhood."

"Who?—where? Did you find them very miserable when you went?" Katy asked, very much interested.

"I—did not go—"

"Well, you sent. Tell me all about them. Mamma, we must go."

"No; I did not send. I asked Mrs. Right, if the person was a member of any church. If she had been of ours, of

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course I should have gone immediately. Mrs. Right did not know."

"Nor *care*, if she is like *me*. Good Heavens! Do you suppose, when our blessed Saviour bade his disciples to 'visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction,' to have 'pity on the poor,' He meant those of any *particular* denomination? Save me from such Christians! Well, I suppose, as I am claimed as 'ours' by none, I can with safety assist any and all. I only wish I had the means."

The lady was going off feeling quite insulted by Katy's rather brusque remark, but Katy called her back, making some little apology, and obtained the information she wanted relative to the suffering people.

An hour after, Mrs. Hart and Katy found them. The mother sat by the bed and gently was rubbing the hands of her boy, "the widow's son." Katy immediately recognised the poor boy that her uncle had driven from the door. Paler, thinner far than when she saw him last, he lay. As she drew near, he opened his eyes. A smile of recognition, a sweet, grateful smile, greeted her, and he murmured:

"The kind lady, mother."

Katy's eyes were dim with tears. Seeing by a quick glance the many things she could bring to make the sick boy more comfortable, she hastened home to get them. Everything was done then to help and comfort the mother and her boy. But it was too late. Poor Willie was dying. The physician whom Katy had summoned gave no hope; only a few days at most would he linger.

Silas Flint returned that night, and Katy told him of the dying boy, and the great destitution of the mother.

Early the next morning Katy started her uncle with her. All was still, not even the painful breathing of poor Willie was heard, as they stood at the partly opened door.

"Hush!" whispered Katy. "He is sleeping, I think.

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Hushed poor Willie had been—yes, to sleep in the bosom of his Saviour. No more suffering then. All was rest and peace.

Katy stepped into the room. With a quick, noiseless tread, she approached the bed. She knew then that Willie was lovingly cared for. He needed no longer the tardy assistance which was offered then.

Silas Flint drew near, awed! Oh, if that was all! Conscience-stricken, he gazed on the little emaciated form. Oh! if he could only have recalled that harsh, hasty, aye, cruel treatment! What if the boy was as he supposed? He might have saved him.

The look of suffering has passed away. An expression of perfect peace rested on his face. About the lips a smile still lingered, and Silas Flint thought how like was that mouth to one he had loved so well, long years before.

A sob in a distant part of the room caused both Katy and her uncle to turn, and see the poor mother, standing in an attitude of the deepest grief, gazing on a suit of well-worn and patched clothes, which hung over a chair. She turned, in answer to Katy's kind, sympathizing words, and Silas Flint beheld the *Mary* he had loved so long ago!

He sprang forward, caught her hand, and said:

"Mary! So near me, and suffering! Oh! why did I not find you before? Why did you not send to me?"

"I could not! How could I?"

Then Silas thought of the child's coming unbidden, and the result. A groan of anguish escaped his lips.

"My poor darling! He never thought of this when he came home that last day, he was suffering so much;" and drawing out the cork, she went to the fire-place and shook out into the ashes the contents, curds of sour milk and whey.

Silas Flint stood aghast!—Proof positive to him then,

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that he had misjudged the poor boy, cruelly treated him, and was in truth instrumental to his death! At that moment he would have given all his possessions to have recalled his conduct.

Gradually he drew from Mary the story of her sufferings. Her husband had always treated her kindly, giving her every comfort, but spending his money recklessly. How he made it, she knew not for a long time. At length it came to her, the dreadful truth: she was living on the gold won at the gaming table! One after another of her children had died, until only Willie, the youngest, was left, the poor afflicted one. He was subject to convulsions, which had affected him so fearfully he could scarcely walk. "He could only totter about!" Mary said, and Silas groaned again with bitter memories.

Her husband had died five years before, leaving her, of course, destitute. For sometime, until the last few months, she had managed to keep from hunger, at least. But lately her health had failed. She could work no more. One kind friend she told of, who gave Willie a bottle of milk every day.

"The last time he was out, this lady, your niece, met him and gave him some money, which kept us from hunger that day and the next. But Willie, poor darling! did not care to eat much after that day. He fell and injured himself coming home. From that he died."

Dear Willie! patient, suffering Willie! so harshly judged and cruelly treated, sleep on your sleep of perfect peace! Silas Flint's heart will never cease its aching on your account.

What was the great surprise of the neighborhood may be well imagined, when poor Willie's little form was carried to the home of Silas Flint, to be borne from there to a beautiful cemetery, and placed in Mr. Flint's own lot.

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When they returned from the funeral, Silas brought the clergyman with him, and seeking Mary, he said:

"It is a sad fate, Mary, to ask you to come to me. But I cannot let you grieve alone. I must try to comfort you. Come! I have never offered to another woman your place. Will you take it now?"

He put out his hand, hers was clasped, and standing before the man of God, their lives were united.

Silas was a changed man after that. He hunted out the suffering ones near home. The most manifest depravity was dealt gently with. He was ever, from that awaking day, seeking to atone for his past terrible error by future acts of *true* charity.

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WHAT THE FUTURE BROUGHT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Be true, great sir! and let who will be famous
Do noble things, not spout them all day long;
So shall life, death, and the long hereafter,
Be one high, sweet song."

She stood straining her eyes to catch a last glimpse of him, as he moved slowly down the path, without once turning for one more look on either the girl or the old, once-loved scenes. With both he had just parted for years, perhaps for ever!

His cold, cruel words were still lingering on her ear, pressing all the young life and sweet, bright hopes from her heart—that heart that had been so true to him, the man who had just cast aside her love, as an impediment in his path.

He was ambitious, and the future promised not only a prosperous career, but success and fame. To this end he must devote his every thought, sacrificing on the altar of Ambition the purest impulses of his nature.

"You will forgive me now, Agnes, and after a while be happier. I am not suited to such a gentle little home-dove; and you would be miserable in the world where I must move and live. We may meet in years to come, Agnes, and then you will still be, as now, good and pure; and I—I will have succeeded in my hopes, and be either contented or miserable—wiser, of course, but, I fear, not a better man.

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Good-by! Tell me you forgive me," he said; and putting out his hand, would have drawn her to his bosom. But she drew back, only placing her hand in his, and answered:

"Go! I forgive you. Be happy, if you can. And should we ever meet again, you will tell me then if your choice has given you happiness."

"I will. Farewell!"

And he was gone from her side, and soon entirely from her gaze. And then all the proud, calm bearing she had sustained gave way, and she sank down on the little rustic bench under the great old oak, where many, many times she had sat with him—where he first had won her promise to be his, and where he had sought her again to give back that promise and break his faith with her.

Bitterly she wept for a little while, and then the storm of passionate disappointment, mortification, and sorrow gave way. The fountains of the heart were dried, and she said:

"These shall be the last tears for him. He is unworthy of them. He has cast aside my love only because I cannot contribute, he thinks, to his advancement. He will marry the daughter of some great man, and likely enough break her heart, because she will surely enough find out he does not love her. No, no; for although another will bear his name, his heart, his love is mine. Oh, why cannot I go onward, forward? Why cannot I become great? There is that within me which might, with culture, grow and strengthen, until I could stand before the world his equal. But, oh! what chance has a girl whose every hour is spent in toiling for bread, with scarcely time for rest or sleep—what chance for study, for even thought?

"Five years ago, when he left me, and bade me keep up a good heart and be true to him, as he would return, and then I should toil no more, then he did not think that the time might come when he would think me a stumbling-

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block! Aye, yes, the factory girl is no wife for one who is to represent his adopted State!

"And I toiled on—hoped on! Bright visions of his success, and my sharing it, filled my mind; I, in my constancy to him, casting off the love of a truer heart.

"Oh, the changes of years! Of the past! What the *future* may bring, who can tell? I feel sure, whatever else, it will not give to Warren Leslie happiness."

The tread of approaching footsteps aroused her, and raising her eyes she beheld the one she had alluded to as the "truer heart," William Allston, coming toward her.

"Weeping, Agnes? Ah! I know—Warren has left you. I met him in the village. He told me he was to leave again to-night. I thought—" He hesitated.

"What? Speak on," she said.

"Well, I thought I might have to bid you farewell—that you would go with him," William Allston replied, his voice growing tremulous.

"No, I shall *never* go with him," she replied, in a low but firm voice.

"*No*—never!" he said, repeating her words, as if he thought he could not trust his ears.

"Never! Now we will talk no more about him," she said, and, rising, placed her hat on, and was about to walk toward the village.

"Stop a moment, Agnes! I came to show you something—perhaps to bring you a ray of sunshine. See here!" He held to her a paper, pointing at the same time to an advertisement; after reading which, she asked:

"Well, what is this to me?"

"Why, Agnes, do you not see? Father saw it, and told me. This is from your father's brother, and he is trying to find you, or any of your father's children."

"Oh, yes, I know now. But really, William, I hardly

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ever think of *that* being my name. You know I was an infant when my own father died; so I have never known anything of his having a brother, and only remember my stepfather, and think always his name as mine. Thank you, William; I will answer this immediately. As you say, 'It may be a ray of sunshine,'" she said, a look of weariness replacing the surprise of a moment before.

"But, oh! Agnes, the ray of sunshine that will illume your path will most likely leave *mine* all the darker. You will probably go to this uncle. But I will rejoice. If your sky grows bright, I am content to have the clouds grow dark in mine," said the devoted man, who had loved Agnes for over five years, without one ray of hope; and when he knew he could not be more to her, he was content to be her friend, sooner than anything dearer to any other woman.

Agnes knew all this, and then she felt the difference in the two men. The one who had left her sacrificed her love to live for ambition, the other would have died to secure her happiness.

"William, where'er I go, your friendship I shall prize very highly, and always think of you with gratitude."

"Oh, Agnes! not gratitude! Oh, if years of toil and waiting would only win *one* thought of—"

"Nay, William, do not talk of that," she said, interrupting him. And then, noticing his look of dejection, she continued: "Of one thing you may be sure. Although I may never be yours, I shall never be any one else's."

A few weeks after, Agnes had left her New England home to find one with her uncle in a far Western State.

She had promised William Allston to write him, and soon the welcomed letter was received, in which she said:

"I have not found a home of riches and splendor, as you predicted, but one of love, and rest from the toil of years. My uncle was entirely alone in the world, and longed for

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some one of his kindred to be with him. He is not at all wealthy, except in the heart's goodness, having only sufficient to keep us in comfort. He is refined, well read, and has, what is wealth to *me*, a very excellent assortment of books. Now I can read, study, and think; what more, the future must tell."

* * * * * *

Ten years had passed since Warren Leslie parted from the girl whom, still loving, he deserted, and married, as she had thought he would, the daughter of one of the leading men of the State, thus taking a great stride on the path of popularity and success. But she who had so much contributed to his advancement lived not to enjoy his triumph. And when in the Senate chamber of the national capitol he stood, one of the leading men of the time, he was also considered the most desirable object for matrimonial speculation and intrigue.

Did his mind never turn back to the love of his youth?

Yes, often, and his heart pleaded earnestly for that love, but pride whispered she was not the mate for him. Again he must choose one from those of high position, in the same circle wherein he moved.

The Senate galleries were crowded by the *elité* of Washington to hear the first speech of the new Senator from ——. Vainly the beautiful girls and their anxious mammas watched for a glance, or some token of recognition, from the distinguished man; but his eyes sought only one face among them all, and often earnestly his glance lingered there. Immediately after his conclusion, he proceeded to the side of a colleague, and asked:

"Who is that lady accompanying your wife?"

"Why, do you not know? That is Miss Jewell from ——. You know her well enough by reputation. She is one of the most gifted women of the age. Strange you

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have never met her! However, she only reached here yesterday."

"You will present me? She is very like—no, not quite that; but she reminds me much of a friend of my youth. I must know her!"

"Aye, and go the way of many others. She was here last season, and made sad havoc with the hearts of many. Indeed, I know more than one of our friends here who would willingly resign his position to secure her favor."

That night the Hon. Warren Leslie again saw Miss Jewell. Only when in perfect repose, her features reminded him of Agnes Archer. When she spoke, the likeness faded. What could there be of resemblance between the elegant, accomplished, and gifted woman—beautiful, too, with the grace of a fairy, combined with queenly dignity—and the pretty village girl, simple, uncultured, and unknown?

Warren Leslie soon not only loved, but really worshipped that gifted woman.

His pride was severely piqued by the calm indifference with which she received his homage.

"She must, she shall be mine!" he said. Yet he dared not lay his heart, his laurels, at her feet. Had not fame crowned her too? Would she care for his?

The papers reporting the speech of the new Senator, called him the self-made man." And a few days after there appeared in the columns of one of the leading journals of the day a reply, or rather a criticism, on that report. The writer, giving full credit to the brilliancy of the speech, the power and force of its argument, and so on, said:

"The man you call 'self-made,' is he so? I say, *No.* There are none such. Where is the mother who bore him, who with her holy teachings first planted in his heart the best, the purest impulses of his nature; who first discovered the earliest buds of genius; who toiled for, and sacrificed

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herself to draw forth his talents? the sisters, whose girlish love for pretty, womanly things, was all sacrificed that *he* should be given all they could to help him onward in his heart's desire? Yes; they give their all—their life often—working day and night until their days of toil are over, that he shall grow great. And when the goal is gained, *they* know it not. And the world called such men *self-made!*"

Warren Leslie saw that, of course, and felt sure from whom it came. He called on Miss Jewell, and said, pointing to the piece:

"This is yours. I cannot argue against it, principally because it is from you; again, because much of it is true; and more than all, because one woman can make me now more than ever woman has before; not only a greater man, but a better, a happier one. You know I love you! I can offer you nothing that you have not, perhaps, but a life's devotion. Will you accept it, Miss Jewell?"

She had always addressed him as Senator Leslie—then she answered:

"You are too late, Warren Leslie."

There was something in her tone that caused him to gaze eagerly, inquiringly into her eyes, and there see a look that brought thoughts of Agnes Archer more forcibly to his mind.

"Has ten years so changed the village maiden that the one who knew her best knows her no more? Warren Leslie, ten years ago you promised me, should we ever meet again, you would tell me if you had gained happiness."

He stood gazing wildly upon her, speechless for a moment, and then springing forward, he caught her hands and exclaimed:

"Agnes, I know you now; and now I know why I have so loved one I thought another. Forgive! forgive! and bid me hope! No, no, I have never been happy!"

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"I cannot. Years ago you cast all hope from my heart. Freely I forgive you, Warren Leslie, but that is all; yours I can never be!"

"Agnes, Agnes, explain this mystery. Oh that I could recall the past, and grasp that happiness that I might have gained! Where is that gentle, loving girl? Tell me; how came she so cold and cruel?"

And then she told the story of the ten years past. Her uncle's loving protection; his help and encouragement in her studies and thirst for knowledge; the discovery of talents, their trial, and final success; and then, in conclusion, she said

"You cannot wonder that my love for you died out, never to be rekindled. You left me in my loneliness; never once glancing back from your victorious journey, to see or care how desolate I might be. Oh, Warren Leslie, the woman you thought could not aid your ambition you cast off. Go! You must seek for love elsewhere! But we may be friends. And there is another friend of your youth who would like very much to see you. I left him to receive you."

He looked inquiringly at her, and she said:

"William Allston."

"Agnes," Warren Leslie said, his voice growing thick and tremulous, "he loved you years ago. How is it now?"

A beautiful blush suffused her fair face, and she answered:

"I have promised to be his."

"*You!* you who can claim the homage of the greatest men of the day, you will—"

"Yes," she replied, interrupting him. "I will turn from the great men here to find one greater than all, to the woman whom he has loved for years, for she knows that he is good, constant, and true."

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HOW THEY PAID HIM.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"DEUCED bad luck you had last night, Will. You must do better next time. Five hundred! That's heavy on a new beginner. Shall you try again to-night?"

"What say? Oh, excuse me. I was looking to see what is going on across there. Are those folks moving? And if so, what is that woman crying about? How pretty she is, or would be, if she had not such a woe-begone look. How I hate to see a woman crying!"

"Ha! ah! If you are not a green one. So as the woman is not crying about you, I do not see that you need worry. Wait until that time comes, my boy, when blue eyes will look pleadingly into yours, and then fill and overflow, or black ones flash fire first, and then pour forth torrents of tears, because you stayed out an hour late the night before, or hesitated about paying a thousand dollars for a shawl or some new fancy. Then you may talk about *hating* to see a woman cry. But say: how do you feel about trying your luck again to-night!"

"Never mind about *that* now. I'm trying to make out what is the trouble over the way."

"Why, one with half an eye can see. There is an execution on the goods, chattels, and so on. A distrain for rent, I mean. See that amiable looking individual who has the honor of conducting this pleasant little affair. Don't be

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seem to relish it? Hillo! what's the matter? Where are you going, Will.?" his friend sang out.

But Will. either heard him not, or heeded not the call, for he was across the street—his eyes flashing, fists doubled; and in a very threatening attitude he stood before the officer, and said:

"Carry that chair back!"

The man turned to confront a tall, fine looking young man, whose general appearance told unmistakably of wealth and refinement. This produced an effect undoubtedly on the man, who hesitated, as if not knowing just what to do. But when Will. Hastings again exclaimed:

"That chair I'm speaking about. Take it back."

"Sir, do you know you are interrupting the course of the law?" said the very disagreeable individual, trying to assume an air of dignity and authority.

"I know this. I'm going to interrupt and stop your taking away that chair. Now what's to pay!"

As he said this, he caught hold of the chair, and quickly ascending the few steps at the door, deposited it in the room. As the young woman came forward, her face changed from its distressed look to one of astonishment. William Hastings hesitated an instant, and then said:

"Excuse me, madam; I do not just understand this affair, but only that I hated to see this chair taken from you, and so I've brought it back again."

What was there about the chair that appealed so directly to the young man's heart!

It was a pretty, comfortable little sewing chair truly, and of make and materials much finer than the other articles which were standing on the sidewalk. But what of that? How many handsome chairs had he seen every day. Ah! it was the memories which the little sewing chair called up—thoughts the purest and sweetest of his life. In just such

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a little chair sat his mother, as by her side he learned his prayers. Although ten years had passed since the last time he lingered near, listening to her gentle, loving words, it seemed but yesterday. The sweet low voice he could hear even then, praying God's blessing and guidance on her boy. Yes, mother was away among the angels: but in her boy's heart, her memory was the dearest thing he knew or felt.

Still gazing with amazement on the retreating form of the young man, Mary Walton saw him approach the officer, and say, in a more composed manner:

"Now, sir, if you will tell me what you were about doing and what *I* shall do to stop your proceeding any further, I think we can better understand each other, and come to terms, most likely."

The man was quite relieved to see the changed mood in one to whom he *knew*, from the first moment, he would have to yield, law or not on his side. In truth, he was one of those individuals that during all his life had been accustomed to rule, oppress and tyrannize over those he could, and in his turn to submit directly to a superiority in any form—mind, money or muscle. In Will. Hastings the three were combined, and Constable Force was well pleased to see a chance of compromise.

"Well, sir, I was about to proceed with my duty. I have in my hand now an execution on the household effects of—"

"There; just stop! I do not want to hear any of that; none of your Smith *versus* Brown, so on, and so on. Only to the point. What is to pay?"

"Four months' rent, fifteen dollars a month; costs, and so on, five dollars eighty-seven cents. Total, sixty-five dollars eighty-seven cents."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, sir."

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Down went Will. Hastings' hand into his pocket, and drawing forth his wallet, he was about opening it, when his friend put his hand on his arm and said:

"Don't be a fool, Will! What is this affair to you? If you commence this way of amusing yourself, you'll find a crying woman or child on every door-step, waiting your passing by. This is an every-day affair. You have to get used to it. If you undertake to pay every fellow's house rent, you'll soon find yourself at the bottom of your pile, I'll tell you. Put up your money, and come on."

"I have commenced this, and shall go through with it," said Hastings decidedly: and drawing forth a roll of notes, he counted out the sum named, and placed it in the hands of the officer, saying:

"Now put those things back in their places," and was about moving away, when the man said, turning to Will's friend:

"Excuse me, sir; but Mister there is a green one sure. He's going off without any papers being signed; not knowing my name, nor who he has helped, and neither of us knowing his."

Will. hearing a part of the man's remark, turned and said:

"True enough; I never thought of that. Go in and explain to the folks, and give them a receipt for the money paid. I guess that is all that's necessary."

Just at that moment a little girl of about five years came running down the steps, and catching hold of Will. Hastings' hand, said:

"Please, sir, come! Mamma say come! Papa say come! Please come!" and she held fast his hand, trying to draw him with her.

Following the little one and the constable, who was already standing in the door, waiting his entrance, Hastings went into the house.

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Several of the articles removed had been returned to the room, and two men were busy bringing in the others. The pretty little woman came eagerly toward Mr. Hastings, saying:

"How is this? Come, sir; see my husband. Tell him how this good luck comes to us. I cannot understand—"

"Just please get from this man some acknowledgment of the payment, and send him off," answered Will., who really did not know just how to explain why he had done the good deed: the doing it came naturally enough, but the why for, was what he could scarcely divine himself.

The pen, ink and paper were soon brought forth, the receipt written, signed, and in Mary Walton's hand; and Constable Force bowed himself out, after having expressed his great gratification at the agreeable termination of his unpleasant business. Again Will. Hastings was about making his retreat, when Mary said:

"Now come in to see my husband. He is too sick to get here to you."

The little girl, seeing how happy her mother seemed, was so joyous, and clapping her tiny hands, sang out:

"Yes, come to see papa. Make papa well! Good, pretty gentleman!" And holding his hand, patting, caressing and kissing it, she drew him into the next room.

Seated in an arm-chair, pale and very sick-looking, was a young man. He made an effort as if to rise and welcome the new-comer, but sank back, saying in a feeble voice:

"Excuse my not rising, sir. I'm still very weak—"

"Please do not try, or to talk either. It is all right now. That fellow has gone. Can I help you in any way?"

"Tell me your name, and why you have been our friend in this hour of need? How can we thank you!" said the sick man.

Will. told him who he was, adding:

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"I think that little chair over there appealed to my heart. My mother used one like it. It brought memories of her pure teachings, and—Well, I could not bear to see that rough fellow taking it off. That is all. Now don't talk of thanks. I'm glad I could help you."

Mary had turned aside to wipe away her tears.

After a moment, to calm the emotion of gratitude and joy which agitated his whole being, Mr. Walton said:

"I cannot express how much we feel. You will find your reward. It must surely come."

And then they both told of his long illness, which had so much increased their expenses that they could not meet the rent due from month to month, until four had passed, when the agent, getting impatient, had ordered the distrain.

"But now I shall soon be strong enough to go back to my work, and shall get even again," Mr. Walton said; and added, "And then where shall I address you, to return the amount you have paid for us!"

"I'll come in again one of these days, and when I want the money I will tell you. Do not think any more of it. I'm going to travel for some time; years may pass before my return, so you will have plenty of time to get ahead in the world before you hear from me," Will. answered, bidding good-bye, anxious to get away from their words of thanks and prayer for blessings.

The little winsome baby girl followed him to the door, saying:

"Kiss by-by, good, pretty gentleman."

Will. Hastings stooped to the little one's caressing arms, pressed his lips to hers, and quickly drawing from his pocket another note, said:

"There, run to your mother, and tell her to get you some candy."

He escaped at last, closed the door, and joined his friend,

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who still waited at the corner, and whose first salutation was:

"A fit subject for the lunatic asylum, I swear. You want a keeper, Will. A cheap amusement, really!"

"Much more so than last night's game; less than one-fifth the amount, and the remembrance decidedly more agreeable. Another thing, the one is lost for ever. This little mite I can get, should I ever wish: and who knows what the future may bring forth?"

"That last remark is true enough. That you may need it is more than likely, if you go on at this rate. But you'll get better sense after a while."

"Hardened, you mean," suggested Will.

Years had passed, and taken with them much of the trusting, confiding nature of William Hastings. At thirty-six, he was a very different man from the Will. Hastings of twenty-three. Hardened, perhaps—or *sensible*, as his friend had predicted. What had time brought him, save disappointment in every form? He had little faith in man—less in woman. The influence of one so pure and holy had long since given place to another's—one young and beautiful, in whom were centred all love, hope and trust. If his mother's memory and image had not been forgotten for love of the bewitching girl who held him subject to her will, no longer was it the power that ruled his best actions. His every thought was of the girl he loved, and how to please and make her happy. And for all the love and wealth he lavished on her, she returned him ingratitude, faithlessness, desertion. When only three years his wife, she fled, leaving a helpless babe to be a constant reminder of the unnatural mother who had so wrecked a noble heart.

The little girl was truly motherless when again William Hastings returned to his native city. The erring woman had been found, forgiven, and laid to rest in a foreign land.

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Sauntering along the street one day, he met his old friend George Landon, who, after a cordial greeting, joined him. A little way they had walked, when George said:

"Look there, Will.! Do you remember that house? I wonder if time has not brought you experience? 'Pon my word, you were an origina lone in those days. By the by, did you ever get your money back?"

Hastings had been listening with a puzzled look as his friend went on talking, and when he concluded, said:

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"Why, man, that's where you paid a fellow's rent, all because of a woman's tears. Don't you remember now? Have you ever called for your money?"

"Yes, now I do remember. But it had passed from my mind. Perhaps I may call some day to see if *they* remember it. I guess not. Well, it's better not to be troubled by memory," answered Hastings, in a sad, nay, bitter voice.

A few evenings after, when again passing the house, which had been so much altered and improved that he never would have recognized it but for his friend calling his attention to it, William Hastings felt a curiosity to know if the Waltons still lived there, and if they would remember him.

"I'll go in anyhow, and see," he thought.

It was when the twilight was deepening into darkness that he entered the litte flower-garden in front of the house, and walking up to the pretty porch, was about ascending, when a low, sweet voice, singing, fell on his ear. A little evening hymn of lullaby she sang, and William Hastings stopped to listen. Soon it was finished, and the same sweet voice said:

"Now, Willie, your prayer, and then to sleep."

The lisping voice repeated after hers the words—blessings on the loved ones near; and then followed another petition, which not only reached the listener's ear, but sank deep in-

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to his heart, stirring up and bringing forth memories that had slumbered for many years: "Bless the good man, father's and mother's friend, wherever he may be. Make him happy, and keep him from harm. Amen."

"Sister, what's the dood man's name!" asked the lisping voice.

"Oh, Willie! you are not half as smart as I was. I always remember *his* name, and you forget your own," said another voice.

"Me's Willie Hastin'," said the baby boy.

An exclamation escaped the listener's lips then, and a movement in the room caused him to think he had better make known his presence. So William Hastings touched the bell, and in another moment a young girl stood before him.

"Is Mr. or Mrs. Walton in?" he inquired.

"No, sir; but they will be very soon. Will you come in?"

"Thank you, yes."

And William Hastings entered the pretty and tastefully arranged parlor. The shaded lamp was brightened, and never had he seen a sweeter face than May Walton's. He was wondering if she could possibly be the baby girl whose little arms encircled his neck that day, so long ago, when coming steps announced the return of her parents.

Mr. Walton approached with an inquiring expression on his fine face, and William Hastings said:

"I cannot expect you to remember me; I am—"

"Yes, yes; I remember. Could I ever forget you, Mr. Hastings!" exclaimed Mrs. Walton, coming forward and clasping his hand with a warmth and cordiality which William Hastings felt came from the heart.

"Welcome! welcome! And why have you kept us waiting for this pleasure so long?" said Mr. Walton.

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William Hastings told of his recent return, and then inquired for his baby friend. May was called in. The roses gathered and brightened on her beautiful face, when her father told her how freely she gave her kisses to their friend in that time of shadows and sunshine. And then little Willie, his namesake sleeping, was shown him.

The hours passed swiftly by, until William Hastings knew it was quite time to bid good-bye.

Mr. Walton, accompanying him to the door, said:

"To-morrow, if you will give me your address, you shall hear from or see me, Mr. Hastings—"

"Never mind. I shall come often with your permission, and we will talk of business some future time," answered Hastings.

"Promise me that you will not go again, without giving me the pleasure of, in a measure, repaying you," said Mr. Walton.

"I will, truly," answered William Hastings, bidding good-bye.

"After all, there *is* some faith to be placed in one's fellow men—aye, and women too, I begin to think. I never dreamed any one in the world cared or prayed for my welfare, except my little daughter. If she should be such as Mrs. Walton or her child, I shall find the world has something still to bind me. I've a mind to ask them to take my little Minnie—I *will*. Then she'll be well cared for; and, I pray God, grow something like them," William Hastings said, as he walked home.

The next evening found him, with his little Minnie, pleading for her with the Waltons.

Gladly they welcomed his child. And little Minnie closed her eyes that night on May Walton's bosom.

Of course, to see Minnie, William Hastings was very often at Mr. Walton's. And regularly, at the end of each

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month, a liberal sum was placed in his hands for her board. Every time remonstrances were made, Mr. Walton saying:

"*When* will you allow me to pay *you?*"

"When I feel *safe* in asking you," was the reply, which puzzled the good man's mind considerably.

Little Minnie had been with them six months, when William Hastings came and said:

"Now, Mr. Walton, I come to ask, I fear, a price you may not willingly agree to pay. Years ago you promised that reward was sure to be mine. You can do that now, a hundred fold. Dare I tell you how?"

"Speak, my friend," said Mr. Walton; but his voice trembled, for his eyes had not deceived him, and his heart had grown a little sad to think another man should share the heart where he had reigned so long.

"Give me May?" asked William Hastings.

"And May—what says she?" returned her father.

A little rustling movement, and May's arms were about her father's neck, her lips close to his ear, pleading in low tones:

"Give me to him, papa! He won me years ago, you know."

"Take her, Hastings. She can truly reward you," the father replied, placing her hand in his.

"Heaven's best reward," answered William Hastings reverently.

A few weeks after, when George Landon received cards to his friend's wedding reception, he remarked to a gentleman standing near:

"Such pay as Hastings has received is quite encouraging. To win such a wife as he has, puts a fellow to thinking very favorably of kind actions, and to be almost a believer in rewards in this world, as well as the next."

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THE GOLD BRIDE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Very rich she is, in virtues,
Very noble, noble certes,
And I shall not blush in knowing
That men call her humbly born."

FRED. HUNTER was as handsome a young officer as ever wore the uniform. He was just a little vain, perhaps. But what wonder? The girls make so much of those young "West-Pointers," and particularly of Fred., who had just graduated.

After an absence of five years, he came to visit an aunt in the city of W——. His coming was welcomed with joy by all friends, both old and young, for all were fond of the merry-hearted youth of years before. But now they beheld him no longer thus, but a man, "all dignity and grace." And the maiden's hearts beat faster, and oftener they consulted their mirrors and curled anew their tresses, sunny or raven, and wondered if he had brought back his heart. Mammas gazed on him, their hearts filled with misgivings. They knew well some of those joyous young spirits would be saddened when Fred. went away; for although he might very well manage to carry away many hearts, his own he could leave with but one.

Fred. stood on a corner of a street surrounded by several friends, when one said:

"There goes Wilkes, one of your old friends."

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"Who is that beautiful girl with him?" Fred. asked.

"His wife. He has been married three years."

"That's a pity. A physician is no longer so popular after he is married, unless he manages to win a fortune. How has he done?"

"The lady's fortune consists alone in her own virtues," replied Fred.'s friend gallantly.

"That was very foolish in Wilkes. A young man of his abilities ought never to encumber himself with a poor wife. You don't catch me at that game," said Fred.

"But suppose you should chance to love a poor girl?"

"I shall not allow myself to do any such very indiscreet thing. I shall never marry a poor girl. You remember the old adage: 'Love goes out the window when—'"

His remark was cut short just then by the appearance of a young girl, who came past quite near, and bowed to the young man whom Fred. was addressing.

"What a splendid figure! I could not see her face for that provoking vail! Who is she?"

"Some one you used to know—Miss Avery."

"Lou. Avery? No; surely not! It seems but yesterday she was a little romping girl in short dresses. What is she doing here? I've heard her parents were dead!"

"Yes, yes; five years makes many changes. You have not seen her for that time? She is residing with her friend Mrs. Worth, as a protégeé or companion. You must renew your acquaintance, Fred. She is quite a belle—would be *the* 'belle,' were it not for a certain little blonde beauty who is dividing the admiration with the dark-eyed Lou., who is truly a bewitching little creature. Guard well your heart, and your *philosophy* too, for Miss Avery has only the wealth of heart."

"Never fear! Never fear for me!" answered Fred. And he waved them a laughing adieu.

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A few days after the above conversation, Lou. Avery sat alone in her cosy little room. Her thoughts were with the past, when she was a happy, thoughtless child, the darling of her father's heart. Four years before, her father passed from earth; another year, and her mother lay beside him in the quiet little church-yard. Since then Lou. had drifted about on the hard sea of adversity; her warm, loving heart oft chilled by the cold indifference of former friends; the impulsive, unsuspicious nature receiving severe shocks frequently, until the naturally sweet spirit of the orphan girl became imbittered. But before the commencement of our story, Lou. had a haven in the home of her friend Mrs. Worth, and protection and security from the slights of the hard, cruel world. She was happier than she had been for a long while, Mrs. Worth's position securing many advantages for her. This morning, however, she felt a little sad—indeed decidedly blue. She had caught the words of Fred. the evening she passed so near him, but then she little dreamed from whom they came. Only a few hours before, she had learned from Phil. Upton that Lieut. Hunter was in town; and he it was who stood with him a few evenings previous. Lou. remembered the merry Fred. with feelings very near akin to love, and she felt hurt and mortified that he had not called. This, and his remark, which reached her ear, caused poor little Lou's depression. But before the close of that day both heart and brain would be severely tried.

Lou. was handy about almost everything. Her little fingers were brisk, her mind always willing. So all the young and old, boys and girls, old maids and young widows, came with bonnets, caps, neck-ties, and gloves, to be made or mended. This day came Miss Mattie Spicer, a spinster of uncertain age and similar temper, for Lou. to make her a bonnet, the box of material for which was a collection of

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more antiques than Lou. had ever before beheld—flowers, lace, silk, velvet, and ribbon—specimens from the time of Mrs. Noah, Lou. thought, all different in form, quality, color, and fashion. "A bonnet she wanted, and a pretty one too. Fashionable of course, but not a patch which could not be seen for the bow of ribbon or flower that covered it. No! A sensible bonnet, to cover her head." Lou.'s fingers flew rapidly over the scraps, culling out the least objectionable; *desirable* there were none. In a very short time a neat, sensible bonnet was held up for Miss Mattie's inspection.

Up went the Spicer's nose, down the corners of her mouth, and with a contemptuous sneer she snapped forth:

"Because I don't happen to be a flirt of a girl, I thank you, I need not be supposed to be as old as my grandmother! *That* thing would suit her if she were here."

Among her own collection, Lou. found and used some pretty pieces of lace, and a bow of delicate lavender colored ribbon, and again held up the bonnet, rendered then more youthful. Another sneer, with the remark:

"I am not aware that I belong to the Quakers, or to any sort of people that object to flowers."

Another hunt, and Lou. produced a cluster of purple bells, and was about arranging them, when again Miss Mattie gave vent to her dissatisfaction:

"Purple and gray! Might as well put me in mourning for some one at once!"

In desperation, Lou. drew forth a bunch of bright bluish rose-buds, and quickly the frown and sneer gave place to a smile of satisfaction. At last the bonnet was a perfect success, and the *color de rose* pervaded the atmosphere.

But poor little Lou. caught it not. She was tired and cross. Her patience had gone through a severe trial. The tea bell was ringing. It was too late to dress. Lou. smoothed her hair, donned a clean collar, and was about to leave her

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room, when she heard a soft rustle outside, and a sweet voice asking:

"May I come in?"

A miracle of beauty, Lou. thought, a vision of brightness truly, floated in. Her gossamer robes waving gracefully behind her, came Minnie Mason, her golden hair flowing in long loose tresses over her fair shoulders, among which drooped clusters of blue bells. Blue ribbons adorned her ample robe, shaking out the folds of which, she asked:

"Not dressed yet, Lou.?"

"No; and shall not be this evening! I'm tired. Are you going out, or do you expect company?" asked Lou.

"No; but I felt like fixing up a little. *I* must dress pretty well, to look at all presentable; while you are always charming in anything. I would not alter my dress; that wrapper is very becoming."

"Just please hush, Minnie! I'm not going to listen to any nonsense; nor tell you how you look. You know, and are very well satisfied too. Come down and get some tea with us; then I am going to retire."

No, Minnie only ran in for a moment, and must return; so off she floated again. And Lou. glanced at the fairy vision, then at her own little dark face in the mirror, and followed Miss Mattie to the tea-room. After which the then very amiable maiden insisted that Lou. should walk with her part of the way home.

It was almost dark, and calling the little children Lou. escorted her tormentor as far as she wished. Returning home somewhat restored to her good-humor, she arrived opposite Minnie's home, thinking to pass unnoticed. But Minnie's pleasant tones arrested her steps.

"Lou., dear, *do* come up? Just one little moment, I want you so much!"

Lou. declined, pleaded her being in dishabille. But no, Minnie would not excuse her.

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Lou. ran up the steps, and Minnie opened the door, and in the full glare of the gas light presented Lieut. Hunter.

A flush of mortification and resentment mantled Lou.'s cheeks, and Minnie exclaimed:

"Now don't be cross. Lou. is always so charming, but she will not let me tell her so."

"This is not the first time I've seen Lou.—excuse me, Miss Avery—in dishabille. I have a remembrance very vivid, of dresses all 'tattered and torn,' and of a youth whose jacket was in such a condition as to bring the wearer well-nigh the undress uniform. Those were happy days, Miss Avery," said Fred. Hunter.

But Lou. was too much hurt and mortified to talk much about old times or new, and soon withdrew; but, much to Minnie's disgust, the gallant lieutenant followed.

He told Lou. he was on his way to call on her, but his friend had induced him to stop with him to see Miss Mason a few moments; and Lou. felt sure then that Minnie knew all about his coming. An hour afterward when Phil. Upton came in, she learned the truth. He had told Minnie he would stop in on the way, to call on Lou.

After they were gone, Lou.'s wrath could no longer be controlled. With her head buried in Mrs. Worth's lap, she sobbed forth all her complaints:

"Yes, indeed; she drew me up. And there I stood, a dark background, to show off the bright, beautiful picture. I looked ugly, and I felt so. The mean girl! I don't suppose Fred. Hunter will ever want to see me again!"

But he did; and the weeks of his stay were spent much in Lou.'s society. But Minnie did not despair. She held him for hours enchained by her constant flow of wit and sweet songs, those she knew he loved so well.

Poor little Lou.! she never dreamed of Fred.'s loving her. Minnie was rich; Minnie was beautiful, and truly bewitching too.

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Fred.'s remark was ever sounding in her ear, and Lou. made up her mind to school her heart to be sensible, and think no more of the handsome officer; just as though girls' hearts were ever taught to be sensible.

Fred.'s leave was over. The next day he must say good-bye, and return to duty.

One of Mrs. Worth's little children had escaped from the nurse, and run off. Lou. went into Mrs. Mason's, the usual resort for the young ones, to hunt for the truant.

She was about entering the drawing-room, when the voice of Fred. arrested her. Glancing through the partially open door, she beheld Minnie standing, her hand clasped in Fred.'s, her beautiful eyes raised to his, looking, oh! so loving. Of course he was returning those tender glances with ardent loving words, Lou. thought.

She stole quietly out, and home. Throwing herself down on the sofa, she wept bitterly—yes, sobbed as though her little heart would break. She knew all along just how it would be, but she did not want to have witnessed her rival's happiness.

She was lost in her sorrow. She heard not the entrance of any one, nor dreamed there was one gazing on her for whom those tears were shed.

A hand was clasping hers. A strong arm encircled her form, and raised her from her drooping posture. Lou. strove to release herself, saying:

"Go away! I am not Minnie."

"Thank Heaven, you are not! Listen, Lou. You have got an article of mine I have come to look after. You must return it, or its equivalent."

Lou. looked up with astonishment, asking:

"What? You are mistaken."

"Not at all. 'Tis my heart, Lou!"

"Stop, Lieutenant Hunter. Only a few moments ago, you probably said the same thing to Minnie."

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"No, no, Lou. Minnie is very beautiful, and—'

"And I am ugly! I have been so ever since that night! and it was all on account of Miss Mattie's old bonnet. I felt ugly, and never looked so—so much so in my life before, and all the time since!" said Lou. her eyes filling again.

"Then Heaven bless Miss Mattie, and her bonnet too; for they gave me the chance of seeing you as you truly are. Listen, little love: 'Fine feathers make fine birds,' 'tis truly said. But men know how much that is worth; or rather, how little. We do not want fine birds; we want something more than that for the home nest—something that will outwear beauty, stand the changes of dress—something to hold our hearts as well as win them. Lou. I want you. I love you only."

"But I am a poor girl. You said you would never—"

"Yes, love, and still stand to it. I have found one rich, very rich. Wealth of the surest foundation will be mine, if you will consent, Lou. Speak, love. Can you love me?"

"I cannot help it," sobbed Lou., her head pillowed on Fred.'s broad breast. "But about Minnie, Fred? I saw you holding her hand," whispered Lou.

"I was only bidding her good-bye, and she was very kindly expressing her regrets, and so on."

"Fred., your friends will laugh at you for forgetting your d termination."

"Not so, love. I will soon convince them I have found a rich wife. Men know the worth, the rare wealth of a pure, artless, loving, constant heart. Such riches as taketh not to themselves wings and flee, I have found," said Fred., solemnly.

And little Lou. looked up into his eyes and smiled, and was as "happy, as happy could be."

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FRANK HAWLEY'S LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"CONFOUND him! Oh, I hate him! That fellow was born to be my evil genius. I feel it! I'll never forgive him while life lasts!" exclaimed Stanley Mervin, a youth of eighteen, who had just entered his mother's room and thrown himself on the sofa. His face was really a handsome one, but just then it was disfigured by a dark, angry expression.

"Then you have lost the prize, my boy. Never mind—"

"Never mind! Don't talk to me so, mother. I do mind. To come so near, and then miss it! One confounded problem the cause. Every one expected me to get it. I felt it would be a very close contest. That he is equally deserving I must acknowledge; still that does not help me to bear any better the mortification and disappointment. Usually, before an audience, he is so nervous and agitated that he does not do himself justice. In this fact I was so sure of triumph. But this time he seemed inspired. And so he beat me—not only gaining the prize, but all the smiles and greetings from the girls, which should have been mine. That's what I mind the most! The girls had decided I must win. Curse him!"

"Oh, my boy! pray don't talk so," timidly urged his mother.

"There, mother, it is no use to preach to me. I hate Frank Hawley! I know what you want to say; but that's

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not in me. I cannot return a caress for a blow, nor appreciate such natures. If a fellow injures me, I'll pay him for it if I can."

A look of sorrow passed over the mother's face as her son quickly arose and walked angrily out from her presence.

Frank Hawley and Stanley Mervin were class-mates in the High school; near about the same age; equally talented, and both hard students. Stanley was the popular boy of the school, particularly with the girls. Frank Hawley was grave and thoughtful in mien, and his face ever wore a saddened look, as though shadowed by some coming sorrow. Stanley, quite the reverse, was gay and full of fun, ever ready for a frolic; and this it was that made him a general favorite. Still these boys, so very different in disposition, were very much alike in person; indeed, when Frank's face was brightened by a smile, which would sometimes chase the shadow away, or Stanley relapse into a quiet, subdued mood, which was a very rare occurrence, the likeness then was wonderful; every one noticed it. Both were widows' only sons.

The day after the prize was awarded, the youths met again. Frank came forward, put out his hand, and not noticing Stanley's reluctance, clasped his, saying:

"Mervin, I do not rejoice one bit in winning the prize; for *myself*, I was careless about it."

An incredulous sneer darkened Stanley's face.

"Indeed, old fellow, I speak the truth. You see, my mother had fixed her heart on it. She seemed to think as with this contest, so would be my course in life. So, for her sake, I prayed to win; only for *mother's* sake, believe me, else I would have gladly resigned it to you. Everybody wanted you to have it, I know. Come, forgive me, and be friends."

"Hawley, I'll be candid with you. This has been a

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severe disappointment, and I cannot feel kindly toward you. Somehow I feel as if this would not be the only contest between us in life. Perhaps a fiercer one might come; so we had better keep apart," said Stanley.

"No, no, nothing of the kind can come, for I feel so differently about you. I am drawn irresistibly toward you —perhaps because we are so alike, as some say, yet still so widely different. I love your bright, merry nature; it does me good to hear your happy laugh. We ought to feel near each other, old fellow, both being our mothers' only ones. Can nothing unite us? I wish I had a sister, to win your love through her's."

It did not occur to the noble-hearted youth that the time *might* come when a woman's love would be the fiercer contest between them.

It was impossible for Stanley Mervin to resist entirely the earnest, candid manner of Frank; so in a degree his wrath was lessened, and he parted from Frank Hawley in apparent good humor. Still, down deep in his heart lay the old feeling, slumbering only.

Years passed on, each young man pursuing his chosen occupation, until five had gone by. Occasionally they met —Frank always greeting cordially his old school-mate; Stanley returning it with his usual graceful and pleasant manner. But Frank felt the wanting warmth, and knew the old grudge was not all gone.

As ever, Stanley was an universal favorite with the girls. A dozen greeted his coming with the brightest smiles; yet his heart was untouched. To save him, he could not tell who or which he liked the most. Hunting over his drawer one day, viewing with pleasure the many little keepsakes from the girls in his boyhood days, he drew forth a daguerreotype, and opened it. It was the pictured face of a girl about fourteen—a sweet, pretty child's face.

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A merry, pleasant laugh broke forth from Stanley as he gazed on the face a few moments, and then said:

"What a devoted, earnest little bird she was! We had quite a serious time in parting, both imagining ourselves very much in love. Let me see. It lasted about three months, I think. Letters by the half dozen a week! 'Pon my word, I had almost forgotten her. I wonder where she is, and what doing these long years—over six, I believe! She must be now almost a young lady. By my life, about twenty! I wonder if she's engaged, or married? She ought to have grown up a beauty—she had fair promise for it. I'll make some inquiry about her when I see some of the boys who used to be dancing around her."

But Stanley soon forgot again Grace Campbell; surrounded by many lovely girls, he had no thoughts of the absent ones.

A few weeks after, while strolling through the park, he saw approaching him Frank Hawley, escorting a girl more beautiful than any he knew. Still her face was familiar. Before he had time to think where he had seen her, Frank rushed up to him, shook his hand warmly, exclaiming:

"Just the man I most want to see! I should have been after you to-night, to present you to an old friend."

Stanley was gazing admiringly and bewildered on the lovely face.

"Can it be possible you do not recognize her?" asked Frank.

A low, rippling laugh floated out on the breeze, and the girl's eyes danced merrily as in years gone by, bringing back to memory Grace Campbell.

"Grace—Miss Campbell! Is it possible? How very beautiful you have grown!" Stanley was about to say; but checking himself, he continued: "How much you have changed!

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Yes, beautiful was Grace Campbell. In years past, the belle of the High school; then, the belle of the season. How proudly Stanley Mervin escorted her from one place of gay resort to another! Constantly he and Frank met then—almost every night—at Grace Campbell's home. To do Stanley justice, at first he meant not to enter against Frank in a contest for Grace's love. It was only a pride he had of appearing frequently escorting the most beautiful girl in town. Then afterward came the hope of winning her. And the evil spirit came to him, urging him on, and whispering:

"Now for the fierce contest! Triumph over him! You can!"

Daily with her, both men grew to love Grace Campbell with a love neither could subdue.

To Frank Hawley's memory came back those words spoken years before:

"Perhaps a fiercer contest may come."

Aye, it had come. Could he retire? No, no. To him it was more than life. He could not resign her without a struggle for success.

With his usual open, candid spirit, he sought Stanley. Pale and deeply agitated, he accepted the offered chair, and then said:

"Mervin, has it truly come, as you said years ago? Are we again contesting for a prize, now the highest one on earth?"

"I fear so," answered Stanley.

"My God, could I not have been spared this? Stanley, this is the *one* love of my life. Why should you wish to take it from me?"

"Why? Because I love to. We are on equal grounds, Hawley. I shall strive to win her, only retiring when she tells me her love is another's."

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"And I must strive on too—win her love if possible; if not, then be consoled by her happiness, which is dearer than my own."

Very kind Grace Campbell was to Frank Hawley. There was such perfect ease and cordiality in her manner to him, that Stanley Mervin, misunderstanding it, grew really to hate the noble fellow, whom he feared would again win from him the prize. Stanley knew but little of women's ways, although so much in their society. Grace's reserve he believed the result of Frank's influence; but Frank knew better. Still, determined to learn from Grace's own lips his fate, he told his love.

"May you be happy, Grace. Believing, nay, being sure you will be, I will be content. We may never meet again. It is best not, for some time. I am going to a distant state. Try to change Stanley's feelings toward me. And if ever a time should come—we know not what the future may bring—that I can in any way serve you or him, command me to any extent."

Grace was deeply agitated. She knew she possessed the love of one of the noblest hearts that ever lived. She knew, too, that his words were earnest, and even unto death would he serve her and hers.

"Good-bye" trembled upon, yet scarcely escaped his lips. There was a wistful, pleading look in the sad eyes which Grace understood, and going to him, she said:

"Will you take with you a sister's love, Frank?" and raised her lips to his.

One kiss, pure as the angels give, a long embrace, and they parted—never to meet again until in that blessed abode "where there is no marrying nor giving in marriage."

Ere six months had passed, Stanley Mervin and Grace were united.

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As Frank had asked her, Grace sought to make her husband understand and appreciate Frank's noble nature, but in vain.

Time rolled by. Little children gathered in Stanley's home—the first, a boy, bearing his father's name. When the little companion God sent to little Stanley first came, Grace said:

"Call this little one Frank."

But Stanley answered sternly:

"Never! I am astonished that you should think of it, Grace."

A short time after, the war began. Stanley Mervin was one of the first to rush to arms.

On the terrible field of Bull Run they met again. The battle was over. Amid the wounded and dying lay Stanley Mervin, suffering terribly, parched with thirst, wild with fever.

"Water! water! Give me a cup of water!" came the cry from many lips.

"Comrade! here, let me raise your head. Here is water!" said a low, sympathetic voice. And Stanley Mervin's head was raised, his eyes to meet those of Frank Hawley. Suffering as he was, he drew back. In his fevered brain quickly grew fearful, terrible fancies. He thought of Grace, of himself dying and dead, of Frank's love for Grace, and he pushed aside the cup of water, saying:

"Curse you!"

"You are suffering terribly, I know. Drink this, and let me fix you more comfortably. Drink, old fellow! Think of your loved ones at home! Live for them!" pleaded the noble man, heeding not the curse, thinking only of Grace and her love for the suffering man.

Too weak longer to resist, Stanley clutched and drained the cup.

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Once more they met, amid the horrors of Andersonville. In the same apartment, close side by side for many weeks they were. Oh, the despair of those long days and endless nights!

One day a letter reached Stanley from his wife. How it came he never knew. He found it, on waking, pressed tightly in his closed hand. Grace wrote:

"I have tried in every way to get you home, with but poor hope of success from any human power. Still I feel confident you will be given back to us. This feeling is so strong within me that it seems a certainty. I tell our darlings of your coming. Our every thought is of you, and when you get home, what we shall do to make you comfortable and happy. Praying constantly for this boon, I *know* it will be granted by heaven, through whose agency I cannot tell. But you must only think of living to get back to your loved ones.

"Captain Hawley's mother had a surety of her son's return. She has an intimate and influential friend in the Southern army; through him the exchange will be made. If you should not come as soon as he, send some tidings to your anxious and loving wife."

After reading Grace's letter the bitter feelings grew stronger. Hatred and jealousy raged in the miserable man's bosom, and he thought:

"Yes, in the end he shall triumph. He will return home and console Grace, while I die here."

A few days after, in the gray dawn of morning, there was a little stir within the prison walls. An officer, holding a paper, read out a few names.

Stanley Mervin felt himself raised up, drawn forth, and pushed forward on and on until out into the fresh air. Conscious only of freedom, he followed on with the others. How the hours or days went by he knew not. Nothing

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was distinct until once more he was clasped in loving arms, and a joyous voice was sounding in his ear, crying:

"Oh, I knew you were coming, I knew it, although they told me nay." And then sobs hushed the loved voice.

Her heart was aching as she saw the marks of his suffering. How worn and thin he was! Loving, tender arms drew him gently toward the waiting carriage. They were stopped by a cry:

"Frank! Frank! Oh, where is *my* boy?"

And an aged form drew near; eyes dimmed by long years and weary watching, then eager, and beaming with a mother's love, sought Stanley's. An instant, and then with a sad, pitiful look and quivering lip, she said:

"Oh, I thought I saw *my* boy Frank. Tell me of him. Did he start with you? They told me he was coming."

"I cannot tell. I saw him before we left. I know not of his starting with us—I can remember so little," answered Stanley.

The mother turned away. The disappointment was more than she could bear. Tottering, she was caught and supported by kind ones. A moment more, and a beautiful, bright, satisfied light broke over the aged face, and raising her hand, she cried:

"Yes, yes, there he is! Do you not see? Gone ahead! Before a little, I'm coming, my boy. O Frankie, what joy, joy!"

The bright look faded, the eager eyes closed. God had mercifully relieved the mother's heart. Frank was found to her.

The crowd drew back, awed, and knowing not what to think.

Had she seen her boy? No, no; it was only a dying fancy. Perhaps so; but I think otherwise. And the

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records of Andersonville tell of the death of Captain Frank Hawley after his supposed exchange.

It was many weeks after Stanley's return home before he grew strong enough to talk of his relief, or think how it could have been effected. And when Grace asked again and again, "How was it? By whose aid?" he could only answer:

"I know not. Nothing, save I was pushed out with the others."

One day Grace drew forth the worn suit of clothes which her husband wore on his return, saying:

"I'll put these carefully away, to show our boys when they are older. But what is this? One of my letters hid in this little pocket?"

"Let me see," Stanley said, receiving the paper, unfolding and holding it close before him.

A moment, and with a deep groan he said:

"My God! how unworthy I was, and am, of such devotion! How I little understood that noble heart! Grace, through Frank Hawley's sacrifice I am with you. Read! read!"

"Stanley, dear old fellow! you will soon be with your loved ones. You must go. Grace and the little ones want you. I have but one to watch for me, and that for a little while only, when we shall be united. I am only a miserable wreck at the best, and would have to go soon, any how. Carry to Grace a brother's love, and teach your children to love their parents' friend. God bless you, and give you long years of happiness with your loved ones." FRANK.

Frank's words, spoken that day after winning the prize, came back to Stanley's memory then:

"Can nothing unite us, Stanley?"

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"Oh that he were alive now, to know how—"

"Stanley, do not grieve. Frank has gained more than earth can give. One day we shall all be united, where there will be no contests, no marrying nor giving in marriage; only love—perfect and pure love!"

"We will call this little one—"

Stanley anticipated her words, and said:

"Yes, dear. We will call him Frank, and pray that he may be like the noble man whose name he will bear."

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THE LITTLE ONES ARE SAFE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

All was over. They had placed the lovely little form amid the flowers, and left her slumbering there.

Across the empty crib, her face pressed close to the pillow on which her darling's head had laid, they found the stricken mother. A little shoe, some withered flowers, a piece of cracker, on which were the prints of baby's teeth, were in her hands. She had found what had escaped the eyes of sympathizing friends, when collecting and putting away all that would tell of little Rose. And, with a fresh burst of grief, she held them an instant before her, and then covering them with kisses, put them in her bosom.

"To leave her alone out there, in the cold, dark grave! Oh, let me go stay with her?" she cried.

Again and again they told her of little Rose amid the flowers in the beautiful gardens of heaven—not alone, but with other little angel babes, her head pillowed on the Saviour's bosom—not "coffined," as she said, not in the dark, but ever surrounded with light and love. All was said that affection and sympathy could offer, yet she could not be comforted. None could give her consolation but One; and his peace, as yet, had not entered her heart.

"Why should He take mine? Others have many. Why, why have I been so stricken? How can I believe He doeth all things well? Is it well to take my all—my only one?

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Oh, why could she not have been spared me?" Mary Foster cried, again and again.

"For her own good, and yours, you will believe in time," was told her.

Days and weeks passed without finding her any more resigned. She nursed and cherished her grief.

In vain her husband strove to divert her mind by change of scene. She returned to her home, as he had carried her away, still sorrowing and rebellious.

"Mary, will you go with me, this afternoon, to plant some flowers on Rose's grave?" her husband asked.

Why he should wish to take her there, some wondered.

She readily consented; but asked:

"Where will we get the flowers?"

He told her, as they went out, he knew several places where they could be obtained.

She manifested no interest in anything during their drive, save once, when they passed a nurse carrying a baby girl, a half-smothered sob escaped her lips. George Foster drew the reins, and slackened the speed of his horse, as they neared a house surrounded by a flower-garden.

"We will inquire if we can get them here," he said.

And when they were opposite the door, he gave her the reins and jumped out. Returning in a few moments, he said:

"Get out, Mary, and sit in the porch. It will take some considerable time to get the flowers, and I do not like you to sit here. Something might startle the horse."

She acquiesced. After seating her, George went out with the gardener to select his plants.

A feeble, piteous moan attracted Mary's attention. At the other end of the porch she saw, lying in a woman's arms, a babe, pale, and apparently very sick. She drew near, and bending over the child, asked:

"Is she very sick?"

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"Yes, Madam, and will never be any better, unless it pleases God to take her."

"How can you talk so? This is not your child, surely," Mary said.

"No, she is not. I am her aunt."

"Ah, I felt sure. No mother could speak so calmly of her child's death," Mary quickly answered.

"Is death all that is to be dreaded for our children?" the woman said, a world of sorrow in her tone.

"Oh, I see you know nothing of such a terrible affliction. I have lost my only one. My baby's dead," Mary whispered, sinking to a seat, and weeping bitterly.

Oh, it is a sorrowful cry, "My baby is dead!" and it touched the woman's heart. Yet she spoke not, until Mary's weeping had ceased, and then she said:

"Once I thought I should have to say, as you have, I too must die or go mad. I had a babe, an only one, lying ill—dying, they told me. I could not give her up. I prayed that she might live. 'God knows best what is good for your child,' they told me. 'Pray for strength to say, Thy will be done!' No, no! I thought it was best for me to keep her. And so I prayed, and prayed only for that. My prayer was answered."

"Ah, then you know not *my* sorrow. You have not lost her," Mary said quickly.

"*Lost* her!" The words escaped the mother's lips as a wail of despair.

"She did not die?" Mary said, awed by the mother's tone and manner.

"No, no. Oh, would to God I could say, '*My* baby is dead!' Oh, blessed, comforting words, 'My baby is with God!' Oh, why could I not have bowed to His will, and been now happy in thinking of her safe with Him, watching and waiting for me!"

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"Where is she now?" Mary asked, in a trembling voice.

"Where? Hush! Ask me not. Yet, to bring balm to a mother's heart, I can bear that mine shall bleed anew in answering you.

"She lived—our only one—raised as it were from the grave to be our idol; beautiful, indulged in every way we could. Petted, willful, she listened not to our warning voice and—we *lost* her!—lost her, in her first bloom of womanhood! Oh, mother! you have a tender sorrow to bear. Mine is the affliction. Your baby is saved."

Mary was deeply affected. What could she say to that mother? What? She aroused somewhat from her own grief then, to try and comfort another.

"You will find her again. Oh, I am sure of it. You are ever praying, I know, and He will answer your petition. She will return to God, and you."

A coming step, and a little cry, as of joy, came from the sick child just then. Mary turned to see a young woman with a sweet, but sad face, approach and gently take the babe from the one holding him. It was the mother, Mary knew, and said, in a pitying tone:

"How sick he seems! How long has he suffered so?"

"Ever since he had the scarlet fever—over a year. Two other little ones died of it," the mother answered, with quivering lips, and eyes filled with tears.

"How could you bear such sorrow?" Mary asked, weeping herself.

"It is harder to see this little one suffering all the time. If he was with his little sisters, he would be free from pain," the mother said, gently smoothing the baby's head.

George came in then, and looked inquiringly and anxiously at his wife. Seeing a different expression on her face, his eyes shone with a hopeful light, as he bade goodbye, and assisted her to her seat in the buggy.

"Have you all the plants you wish?" Mary asked.

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"Not all. I've engaged some others, a little way further on," George answered. "Here is the place. Will you get out? or shall I get that boy there to stand by the horse?" George asked.

"I think I'd rather get out. It is a lovely place," Mary said, having caught sight of a happy looking woman, who sat under the trees, surrounded by a half dozen bright looking children. She thought she would like to be a little while with a happy mother. She had just left such afflicted ones. The little one bowed pleasantly to George, and placed a rustic chair for Mary.

Just then a merry little boy ran up, and tossed an armful of flowers in the woman's lap, lisping out, "Dive the pretty lady some too."

"What a bright little fellow! How many have you?" Mary asked.

"None here—three in Heaven," the little woman answered, a look of sweet content on her face.

"All taken from you! Oh, how hard to lose all!"

"I hope to find them again. I might not, if I had been taken first from them," the mother said.

"And these children?" said Mary.

"Are my neighbor's. I love to have them about me. When my little girl was first taken, I grieved deeply and long, and could not bear to see other little girls of her age. But after a while, I grew to think of her as she really is—a happy little angel, saved from all sorrow or evil. And I felt that we had some one up with God, who would be constantly pleading with him for our good. I thought that there the other little children were guarded by an angel with more love than the other angels would have for them, and I felt as if her pure spirit would hover about and draw from evil her father. He was not so steady then. Now he is all I wish. I think of her as having won his reformation. After

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a few years more, another little girl was taken. Her going was not so hard to bear as the first. 'She is with Katy,' I said. 'They were always together here.' The separation hurt her so much. She grieved for her little companion continually. Now they are together again. And I found comfort so. I had still one left. My boy—a noble, handsome little fellow—our pride. His father was quite foolish about him. I feared so much he would spoil him. I dreaded lest he should get into evil, as so many I knew. At length he too grew ill. Then I felt I could not give him up. I prayed that he might live. And one day, while I watched beside his bed, a little bustle in the street caused me to raise my eyes and see, across the way, the only son of my dearest friend, a youth of nineteen, carried from his home handcuffed. Afterward he was convicted of murder, and is still in the State prison. He had been drinking hard, and got into a quarrel and fight with some of his evil companions, which resulted in the death of one. After seeing that dreadful sight, I knelt down and prayed, 'God's will, not mine be done.' That evening my boy called me, and feebly asked, 'Mamma, have I *two* little sisters in Heaven?' I told him Yes. And he put up his little hands and said, 'I see them. They are beckoning me to come. Yes, I'm coming, sisters,' he cried; and thus he left me too."

"And you still live on, and are so cheerful! How is it?" asked Mary.

"What should trouble me now? Are not my darlings safe? Away from the sorrows, temptations and evil? The beautiful things of earth are pleasant to me, but no longer binding. Nothing requires my care. I am only waiting for His permission to find my angel babes. Would I not cling to this life if they were here? Could I ever bear to think of leaving them? No, no. They are safe; and I have no longer a dread of death, for I have angels waiting for me."

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"I am ready, dear," said George, who had, unnoticed by Mary, drawn near, and stood waiting for her.

"Yes, ready, if you are," Mary answered with a sweet smile on her face, the first George had seen since the baby's death. And she pressed the hand of the mother beside her, and said:

"I am coming to see you again. I feel happier for these few moments spent with you."

Mary returned from planting the flowers on her baby's grave, comforted. Peace had entered her soul—"His peace which passeth all understanding."

Mary's loving, anxious husband had sought in every way to bring some consolation to her. Providence directed his steps to the mothers who had suffered so severely. He could have narrated to Mary their sorrow, but he thought it better that she should hear it from the mother's lips. And so he took her to them.

She knew then of an affliction more cruel than death—of a mother who had seen one after another go, until all her darlings had passed from evil and sorrow, and felt resigned to His will. Why should she not think only of the angel child, watching over her, waiting for her—safe in the home of Him, whose love is more perfect than even a mother's love; who knoweth what is best for His little ones—and not of the little lifeless form slumbering in the silent grave? And so she grew soon to think of her little rose. Flowers are blooming on the baby's grave now, and hope in the mother's heart.

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DON'T BORROW.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry."
—SHAKESPEARE.

"Borrow? No, sir. Not as long as I have my senses about me! I might be induced to *beg*, perhaps; but to *borrow, never!* I'll want for bread, suffer with cold, and go half clothed, aye in Indian style, before I'll borrow!" exclaimed Charley Cameron with so much feeling that he caused his wife to cry out:

"Oh! dear Charley, you'll smash up all my glass and china, if you bring your hand down on the table in that very forcible way!"

"Well, Nellie, you know that subject does agitate me considerably," said Charley rather apologetically.

"Well, look here, my old fellow; when you come down so hard on borrowing you touch *me*, although I am not very sensitive on the subject. Bless you! the shirt I've on now is borrowed; and my best coat is appearing at a reception to-night."

"I would not have worn it to have saved you from the Cannibals!" exclaimed Charley.

"Oh, pshaw: We don't mind it. You have heard it laughingly said that 'it takes a ship's company to get one of the officers ready for a ball.' Well, it is not quite so bad as that; but you know that we have just got in port this morn-

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ing, and having been off on a long cruise, many of us needed a little help in the getting up for our appearance this evening. But do tell me; why you are so opposed to borrowing?" asked Charley's friend.

"Because I've seen people suffer from it. Well, I will tell. It will amuse you, I know, and may do you good too.

"A very particular friend of mine—we will call him Ned Smith—determined to spend his usual vacation during the summer down on the Potomac river, and have a grand time of fishing and crabbing. So, packing his valise with just such clothes as were suitable for the trip, he started, reached his destination, and found several acquaintances, among them some real merry fellows, whom Ned felt quite certain would insure for all a pleasant time; and never had any of them spent two weeks more agreeably.

"The time came for their return, when one of Ned's cousins, living near, issued invitations for her wedding, and insisted on Ned's acting as groom's-man.

"It was a very hastily gotten up affair. They were not to have been married until the next winter; but the gentleman's business called him unexpectedly to Europe. Hence the sudden change in the arrangements.

"There was but two day's notice—not time for Ned to go or send to town for a suitable attire; so he declined, stating his reason. But his cousin pleaded and insisted, and when she told who was the young lady to act as bride's-maid, Ned wished very much that he could be with her. And at length, when it was suggested that one of the other gentlemen, Tom Morrow, should be, if he persisted in his refusal, Ned determined to acquiesce, and trust to luck for 'his getting up' for the occasion.

"The truth was he had met, the winter before, the young lady, Eleanor Marston, and was very much pleased with her. Tom Morrow had several times spoken very highly of her,

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and declared his intention of seeking her acquaintance, on his return home. He had seen her, and admired her very much. So Ned felt a little uneasy about Tom's having so good a chance to do the agreeable to Miss Marston. Tom was a handsome fellow, and very well calculated to please the ladies.

"Upon a close examination of his wardrobe, and the combined consultation of the young gentlemen of the party, it was decided that Ned could make a very presentable appearance, with only one exception—a coat was needed.

"That difficulty was speedily removed. One of the young men had a coat, a perfectly new one, that he had 'never worn;' and he brought it forward, stating that circumstance, and insisted that Ned should accept the loan of it.

"Ned was a little averse to borrowing it, but it was a matter of almost necessity; and then, as the owner was a very intimate friend, he at length accepted it. Upon trying it on, it was found to fit as if it had been 'made for him,' they said; but it was a very tight fit, and Ned did not feel very comfortable when he first put it on. However, if that had been the only discomfort, it would have been very well.

"The evening before the wedding Eleanor Marston arrived. She was more beautiful than ever, more charming in every way; and Ned's heart was no longer in his own keeping.

"The morning of the wedding-day arrived, and Ned was congratulated by all the boys on his fine appearance.

"The ceremony was about noon; after which there was a dinner party, and dance in the evening. With the dinner, Ned's discomfiture began. He was doing his best to make himself useful as well as ornamental, helping the ladies to cream, ices, and so on. When just handing something of the kind to Miss Eleanor, some awkward fellow knocked up against him, and threw out much of the contents of the sau-

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cer. Endeavoring to save the lady's dress, Ned's coat, or rather his friend's, caught it considerably. The owner was near by—any one with half an eye would have known it was his coat by his look—and jumping up, he began to use a napkin very assiduously, to get off the mixture. Ned felt as if every one in the room knew all about it then. A few moments after he knew many of them did, for the fellow said, in a low tone, but loud enough to be heard by many near, 'Why, the thunder, Ned, must you make a waiter of yourself? Let the servants do that. I hope it won't stain! Think it will?'

"That fellow was beside Ned, watching the welfare of that confounded coat all the time. Nothing more, however, occurred to annoy the miserable man for several hours, and he was getting to feel a little more comfortable, when the dancing began.

"Then Ned was in his glory. He could dance well, and he knew it. Forgetting all about the borrowed coat and its very close fit, he entered into the dance with spirit. They were in the midst of the Virginia Reel. When Ned had just gone through his part he felt a touch on his shoulder, and looking quickly round, the coat's owner said in an undertone:

"'I'll swear, Ned, if you fly about in that manner, you'll finish my coat to-night! Be a little more careful. You are perfectly welcome to it, perfectly, only be a little careful. You may want to borrow it again!"

"Ned felt then it would be a relief to pull off the dreadful coat and cast it in the fellow's face. But he could do nothing but bear it. Looking up, he saw Eleanor's eyes dancing merrily, and fixed on him.

"That miserable night came to an end at last, and Ned reached his boarding place. Quickly he drew off the coat, and swore he would never borrow again.

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"The next night the brother of the bride gave the happy couple a party. And of course Ned's duty was there. His friend apologized, and offered it again, saying:

"'Don't be so foolish, Ned! You are just as welcome as if it was your own. I only wanted you to be a little careful as I would be myself.'

"But Ned would not accept it.

"Then Tom Morrow came to the relief.

"'Ned, my coat is not quite as handsome, but I do not think the difference will be noticed at night. Do take it; and feel and act as if it were your own. I do not care if you finish it to-night. I am only too happy, if it will suit you to accept it. I'd think no more of wearing your coat than my own, if I needed it.'

"So, with this very cordial offer, Ned at length donned the coat. But his experience of the night before made him very careful. He was very particular in keeping out of the way of the good things of the supper table.

"Standing by, fanning his lady-love, while she daintily touched her cream, Ned's attention was attracted by Tom, who stood near, and motioning him a little aside, he whispered, but loud enough to be heard by many near:

"'Don't be a fool, Ned! Use that coat as if it was your own. I don't care if you should upset the whole contents of the table on it!'

"Choking down the wrath, and the wrathy words he wanted to speak, Ned looked at Eleanor. Yes, again she knew he was in borrowed clothes. Her laughing eyes told that.

"Thinking to satisfy his friend, he joined in the dance; and feeling that his acting as if he was clothed in his own would stop the comments of Tom, Ned again forgot his discomfort.

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"Soon, however, he was brought back to the reality of his situation, for Tom was near, whispering:

"'That's right, boy! Split the coat if you choose. I don't care; you are perfectly welcome to use it, abuse it, and finish it, if you choose.'

"Determining never again to place himself in such a situation, Tom was glad when the hour for dispersing came.

"When about waiting on Eleanor to the carriage, Ned found it raining. Quickly obtaining an umbrella, he was holding it over her, thoroughly protecting her from the rain, he thought, when again that terrible fellow sang out:

"'Ned, hold that umbrella over the lady. Never mind the coat, if it gets soaked. I don't care a fig.'

"Oh, that was the last stroke—the feather that broke the camel's back. As Eleanor stepped in the carriage, Ned tore off the coat, threw it at, and himself upon, the owner; and before any one could interfere, gave him a pretty good pommelling and boxing!"

"Ha! ha! Well, I must admit your friend has good cause to be down on borrowing. Well, how did it end? A duel, or a night in the lock-up?"

"Oh, no; nothing of the kind. Those fellows had been worrying me, they admitted, a little beyond endurance. And Tom got up and acknowledged I served him right."

"*You!* Oh! now I understand your feeling on the subject."

"And, you must know, that last feather and its effect won Charley his wife. I saw he had the right spirit. I began to fear he was not the man for me," said Nellie.

"Why, Mrs. Cameron! You admire fighting men, I see!"

"Indeed I do! For I know that the man that can take care of himself, can take care of his wife, and his friends too."

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"Well, after all, Charley," said his friend, "I do not think you need be so very hard on the borrowing subject; for I'm sure, whether your friends were joking or in earnest, that borrowed coat secured you the best luck in the world—a good wife."

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LUCY'S JEWELS.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"I DECLARE, Lucy, full thirty minutes have passed since you have spoken, moved, or even raised your eyes from the one spot in the carpet! A penny, nay, a hundred of them, for your thoughts," said merry Hattie Kennard.

"Oh, I will tell you; and if I am right, Lucy shall own up, and I'll claim the pennies," answered Belle, Hattie's sister.

"Very well; agreed," said Lucy and Hattie simultaneously.

"Well, Lucy has been thinking of three young gentlemen, her most ardent admirers. Gus. Hartley, the handsome, fascinating fellow. Then of Austin Wellworth, Esq. If I were ambitious of wealth, I'd certainly take him. And last, and least too, in Aunty's estimation, I know, John Farleigh; good, honest John, but poor, dreadfully so. Now Lucy has been for the last half hour thinking of these three; if she should make supremely happy one of them, with which would she be happy. Am I right, Lucy?"

After a moment's hesitation, Lucy replied:

"Yes, I was thinking of them, but not just as you have stated it. But you have fairly won the pennies—"

Here she was interrupted by Aunt Hannah:

"I hope not *just* as she stated. The idea! *I* think think there are only two to be considered at present. John Farleigh! I don't know how he presumes to come here.

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Poor! worse than poor, with his mother and sister to support on an income of a thousand dollars a year!"

"Aunty, I believe John Farleigh most worthy. His poverty I very much regret, alike for his mother and sister, as well as himself. But I think them very rich in possessing such a son and brother. However, I don't think you need be uneasy about his coming," answered Lucy.

"You know he loves you," whispered Belle.

"Indeed, I think it is quite time you should decide between your lovers. While you are hesitating you may lose the right one."

"Who is he, aunty?"

"Why, who else but Mr. Wellworth? He is the only one you could be sure was not after your fortune, more than yourself," answered Aunt Hannah, as she left them.

Mr. Farleigh failed in business, and died, when his son was about eighteen, leaving the widow and daughter to his charge. Of course his studies had to be abandoned then, and all his time devoted to their support.

If Lucy had a kindlier feeling for John Farleigh than either of the other mentioned gentlemen, her cousins failed to discover it.

A half hour after, the door opened and Lucy's guardian, Mr. Clayton, entered. Smiles were still lingering about his lips, and he said:

"I think you have been teasing your aunt sadly, Lucy. She has just been opening her heart to me. She is very anxious about your selection of a husband."

"I know, Guardy. So she has decided for me. How do you like her choice?"

"I'm glad he's not yours. That is, I hope not."

"Why, Guardy?"

"Because I know nothing certainly of his wealth—only what report says. He may be just what your aunt fears for you."

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"What of Mr. Hartley, sir?" asked Belle.

"A good-natured, good-for-nothing young man, who will spend all he can without earning a dollar."

"And Mr. Farleigh—tell us of him," said Hattie.

"A noble fellow. But not the husband for any one; that is, during his mother's life, unless his sister should marry some one able and willing to care for her mother, or unless some unlooked-for good luck comes to him. John, poor fellow, his life is wedded to those depending on him for support. He has fine talents. His father was anxious for him to study law. Any commands to-day, Lucy?"

"Not to-day, Guardy. Do you remember—next week I shall belong to myself."

"Oh, yes; I've been thinking about it. And you want to let me know now, you are going to be just as extravagant as you choose, and I will have no longer the right to chide. That is it, little lady. Well, I'm quite anxious to see how you will act when you 'belong to yourself,' as you say." And, with a pleasant smile, the good man took leave of them.

Lucy Nelson was an orphan, in the comfortable possession of a hundred thousand dollars; consequently was courted and flattered. Notwithstanding which, she was a sensible, sweet, affectionate girl. And John Fairleigh loved her with all the fervor of his noble, loving heart; yet without hope.

A few evenings after the above conversation, John Farleigh stood in the door of his humble home. Coming down the street, bent, and with feeble steps, he saw an old woman. When she reached his door she stopped, and said, in a low, trembling voice:

"May I stop here and rest a bit on your steps, please?"

"Not on the steps, but come in. Mother will give you a cup of tea. Come." And with tender car he assisted her up the steps, and in, calling, "Mother—Clara, here is an old lady very tired. Make her comfortable, please."

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The door was opened, and a pleasant, gentle-looking woman came out, followed by a beautiful girl of about sixteen, who drew the wearied traveler in, seated her in a comfortable chair, and would have relieved her of her hood and wrappings, but she objected, saying she would rest only a few moments. Clara drew up a stand, and placed a cup of tea and biscuits before the old lady. While she still lingered with them, John came into the room, and said:

"I'm going out now, mother, and may not be in before ten."

"Ah, I know where," answered his mother, as she observed his careful toilet. "Oh, my boy, is it well? She can never be yours. Why will you linger near her? Every hour will make it harder for you to resign her to another, as it must be."

"Don't, don't, mother dear. I must see her—be with her while I may. Do not mention the future. I live only in the present. There, good-bye, I'm off. But stop." Coming up to the old woman, he said, "You have walked far, I know. Now do ride as near your home as possible." And he dropped a piece of silver in her hand. The hand trembled as it closed tightly over the money. He hastened out, and heard not the low-whispered thanks and blessings which reached his mother's ear.

"Yes, yes; you are right. He *is* good—my noble boy! But he has a heavy burden on his young shoulders. Would that it could be otherwise!" Mrs. Fairleigh answered.

The old woman arose to go. They bade her come again whenever she was near. And with many thanks she left them.

The days passed by until the one came which gave Lucy the right ever after to use as she chose her wealth. She entered her guardian's office, and said:

"I've come, Guardy, to crave a birthday boon. You must not refuse."

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"Well, tell me what it is. I'll not refuse unless for your own good."

She bent over him, and whispered in his ear.

He started in real amazement.

"Ten thousand! Why child, what can you want with so much? Oh, I surmise; I heard your cousins talking of a set of diamonds. But really, Lucy, let me advise you—"

"No, no, Guardy. You know I might insist, but I only plead. Let me have it, and I'll promise to economize enough to satisfy you for the next three years. And I intend to come to you, as heretofore, for every dollar until—well, until I no longer belong to myself."

"My child, I fear you will make a very poor investment. Diamonds are not likely to increase in value."

"I've not told you if that is what I want the money for," she said.

"Ah, but I know."

"Well, yes, I shall invest that amount in diamonds, if you will insist on my telling you."

The check was drawn, and Lucy went away quite happy, while her guardian felt very anxious indeed. He said:

"She is a good girl, a very good girl, but dreadfully extravagant. She'll go through her fortune right away, if I do not manage to check her. A miserable investment. I must try to make it up in some other way. I'll try my hand at investing for her now."

It was not long before the Fairleighs again saw the old woman, who came to claim their hospitality once more.

"I'm going away," she said. "I wanted to see you again, you were so kind to me. I shall never forget you."

She remained but a little while, and then bade them good-bye. A few moments after, when Clara stooped down to pick up a spool of cotton, she saw, lying behind the arm-chair where the old woman sat, a little black bag, which

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she immediately recognized as belonging to her. Picking it up, she ran out on the front steps, and looked up and down the street, hoping to see the owner, but she was nowhere in sight. Thinking she would most likely miss it and return, she went back. But the evening passed without seeing or hearing again of the old woman. The next morning, Clara said:

"I think we ought to look in the bag, and, if it is of any value, try to find the owner."

John thought so too. It was opened, and, to their great surprise, in it was a note addressed:

"To my kind friends."

Opening which, John read aloud:

"I have not left my bag by mistake. I came to do so. You have all been kind to the old woman you will never see again; but that you may think of her often, she leaves you a token of thanks. It will relieve the young shoulders of their burden, and his heart too, perhaps. You need not try to find me. But a little while and earth will know no more the old woman. I have more than enough still to maintain me, should I live more than the alloted time. You will find with this certificates of money placed in the Union Bank, subject to the order of John Fairleigh. Do with it as you choose. Gratefully, your OLD WOMAN."

John was bewildered—they all were. Could it be real? They were not dreaming surely. Dollars, many thousands, for them!

Although the cashier of the mentioned bank was well known to John Fairleigh, it was not without considerable hesitation that he went to see if such good fortune was really his.

"Yes, it is just so, Mr. Fairleigh. And I was but little less surprised than yourself," answered the cashier.

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"Have you any idea of who the person is?" asked John.

"Not the remotest. I only know that an old lady came here yesterday, and in a perfectly business-like manner made the transaction."

How happy John Fairleigh was—not because of the possession of money, but because he had then the means to obtain a profession. His father's wish and intention could be secured, and his mother and sisters could live comfortably during his years of study and struggling for success. And then hope whispered more—more than that. Dare he listen?

Mr. Clayton insisted many times on seeing Lucy's diamonds. When at length she placed before him the sparkling jewels, he said:

"Well, well, they are very handsome; but our cook has just as good-looking a set—that is, to my eye; but, of course, I'm no judge—and she paid less dollars than your thousands. However, I suppose it is a great thing to feel sure you have real jewels."

"I am perfectly sure of the *worth* of mine, Guardy," said Lucy, with a bright smile.

Mr. Clayton was considerably relieved about the ten thousand so poorly used, for he had made an investment which seemed very certain of more than doubling that amount. Before a year had passed, his own, and all of Lucy's possessions, save three or four thousand, retained for her immediate use, were swept away in a crash which wrecked many others with them.

Bravely Lucy bore it, cheering as best she could her guardian.

"I've a little fortune yet, Guardy. I shall not want," she said.

"A pittance. You have your diamonds, though. Your investment has proved better than mine, child."

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"Then cheer up, Guardy. Your boys will prove diamonds to you. And I have mine. So we are both above real want, and will come out all right by and by."

Sooner than Lucy had dreamed came the time to prove who loved the *woman* and who the *heiress*.

The charming Gus. Hartley's and the wealthy Austin Wellworth's ardent devotion grew suddenly very moderate, and finally ceased. The home of Lucy knew them no more. But often came John Fairleigh.

Three years had passed. He was before the people. They felt his great ability. Another year, and he stood one of the ablest lawyers of his time. Then he came and told his love.

"I've been waiting for this for years, John," Lucy answered, placing her hand in his.

"And—can you—do you mean—oh, tell me?"

"That I am yours. My heart has been, ever since I first knew you."

What John answered was intended for Lucy's ear only, and I shall not write it for other eyes.

When Mr. Clayton had given the bride away, and she was no longer her "own woman," she drew him aside and whispered:

"Guardy, I deceived you when I displayed what you thought my diamonds. They were false. *Here* are the real jewels," and she directed his gaze to her husband, his mother—hers—and their sister. Then she told him all about the old woman's investment, and concluded by asking:

"Has it not proved a good investment? Shall I ever want, think you, Guardy?"

"Yes, and no, little Lucy; the best investment in the world. And you will never want—at any rate, for the best thing that earth can give—true love. You are a wise little woman," answered her guardian.

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"This is my secret, divulged only to you. You will keep it?"

"Sacredly, my dear."

Years after, Lucy sent her husband to hunt for an antique jewel. While thus engaged, he found a little silken bag. Opening which, he saw a silver coin, with a slip of paper, on which was written, "Given me by dear John, Nov. 7th, 186—."

How swift are our thoughts! how clear and bright, and how simple, the most difficult problem becomes, when we have the key given us! Thus it was that the mystery of years was solved. Chance had given John his wife's secret. It was the only one she had ever kept from him. He would not let her know it was one no longer. He felt it due to her that his mother and sister should not only love her for what she *was*, but also for what she *had* been to them. When John placed in his wife's hand the jewel she had sent him to find, his heart was rejoicing in the knowledge of possessing *one* surpassing the value of all other jewels earth can give.

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AUNT ADA'S RUSE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Excellently well done! and God did all.
—SHAKESPEARE.

Half the charms that deck her face
Are due to powder, shreds, and lace.
—GOLDSMITH.

"OH, Aunt Ada! dear good aunty! I am in so much trouble! You have so often helped me out of scrapes and through difficulties; now pray come to my relief, in my hour of greatest need!" exclaimed little Susie Gleason.

"Why, what is it, Susie? I declare you are really crying!" said Aunt Ada, as Susie sank on a stool at her feet, and dropping her head on her aunty's lap, began to cry.

"Indeed it is a crying matter. You know old Lawyer Aiken, how much he has been coming to our house lately; and you heard mamma saying, last week, that Mr. Aiken thought I was such a good girl, so attentive to mamma, and some flattering speech about my being a household angel, or something of the kind. Well, I was really glad he had so good an opinion of me, because— Well, you know he is Gerald's uncle, and I want him to think well of his nephew's choice. You have known for some time, aunty, that we— Gerald and I—think a great deal of each other. But, O dear! I fear that will end very differently from what we hoped! Mamma told me this morning that Mr. Aiken had asked her permission to address me. And she, mamma,

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seems very much pleased, and has almost made me promise, if he asked me to marry him, I will consent."

"Why, Susie, my child, I cannot see this is such a terrible matter, after all! First, Lawyer Aiken is a man of high position, immense wealth, good looking, and very agreeable, I think," said Susie's aunt.

"Then, if you think so well of him, I wish you would take him yourself," said Susie.

"My dear, he will not take me. But if you do not think you can be happy with him, then say so, and don't worry any more about him."

"Oh, Aunty, you do not comprehend half the difficulties. Mamma has set her mind on it; she wants me to live in splendor. She is in such a weak, nervous state, I fear to thwart her wishes. Then, if I should, and vow I will not have Mr. Aiken, I would not dare to marry Gerald; for then his uncle would surely discard him, and I should cause poor Gerald more misfortune than happiness, I fear. Now, what am I to do? I don't see why he did not marry somebody before I was born! Then I shouldn't be worried now! I do not know why he thinks so much of me! He has only seen me three or four times in mamma's dark room. I really don't believe he knows whether I have black eyes or blue, or anything about my looks, for I'm certain he is almost blind. But he tries to hide that!"

"Well, dear, this is more serious than I had thought. But I'll see what can be done. You must not give him an opportunity to ask you just yet. And in the meantime I will set my wits to work, and perhaps we may end this without any serious detriment to Gerald's propects. Why, here he is now!"

"You know the trouble, I see, Gerald," said Susie, as that young gentleman came forward.

"Yes, Susie, the old gentleman asked me last night if I

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was engaged to you. I told him No, but I was thinking of such a thing. And before I had gotten the words clearly out, he said:

"'Well, think of it no more, sir. I have a wife picked out for you. And for myself, I have thought of Miss Gleason. You understand?'

"Now, Susie, you must excuse me. I said:

"'Uncle, I thought you were a great admirer of beauty. Miss Gleason is not near so handsome as many of the ladies you know and could marry. She is almost plain looking.'

"'Indeed, sir! And what is that you admire in Miss Gleason, may I ask?'

"'The goodness of her heart, principally. Then she is bright, witty, spirited, and quick at repartee!' I answered, knowing these last possessions he disliked very much. He wants a woman quiet, gentle, submissive, and retiring. Imagine his bringing me to a short stop, by exclaiming:

"'*Those* are just my reasons, sir! What do I care for *beauty*—outward beauty? Nothing, sir! Give me beauty of the *mind* and *heart*, and I care not if she has black eyes or blue, or indeed, I might say, whether she has one or two! When Miss Marlow returns from Saratoga, I shall introduce you. You will not find it a difficult matter to become attached to her. She has the qualities you admire!'

"Oh, dear, dear! And this Miss Marlow—have you ever seen her, Gerald?" said Susie.

"Yes; she is the daughter of a very old friend of uncle's, ahead of me by about fifteen years. Very wealthy though, and that is what uncle is after for me. And for himself, he wants youth, good looks, good temper. He has a perfect horror of fashionable ladies. I have heard him say often, that 'the women of the present age seemed determined to fully merit the old saying: 'Oh, woman, thou art false!' and that he should not ask any one to become Mrs. Aiken

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until he felt quite certain he should be indebted to *nature* more than the *modistes* for his wife.' So, Susie, to this fact *you* are indebted for the great honor that is to be offered you!" said Gerald.

"Oh! if I only could have a kind fairy come, and not, like Cinderella's, make a beauty of me, but bestow on me all that is requisite to make a very fashionable young lady, and drive off Lawyer Aiken! Really, I would not mind losing all my hair and teeth, and becoming pale and sallow, to get rid of him!" said Susie.

"Come, come; do not be inviting a fairy to come on any such mission! Remember, I've something to say about that, Susie!"

"Gerald, I could supply the deficiencies; and if my heart is not false, you will not mind," said Susie.

"Aye, Susie, darling, you are right. If a woman's heart is true, what matters the rest? Time will change all else, and if the heart is right, the wife will never grow old or less beautiful to her husband," Gerald answered earnestly.

"Do not look so hopeless, Susie. Cheer up, and try to prevent the lawyer from getting a chance to ask you. You need not be rude, only smart and bright, and in the meantime I will try to help you," said Aunt Ada.

"But, Aunty, he will be at our house so many times next week, fixing up some old papers of papa's. Then he will be sure to catch a chance."

"Well, I will come over quite often, and sit with your mother, and help you evade him. Keep up a good heart, Susie, and trust me," said Aunt Ada, as Susie bade her good-bye.

Many times the following week Lawyer Aiken visited Mrs. Gleason's, ostensibly to examine sundry papers, really to get a chance to ask Susie to become Mrs. Aiken. But fortune never favored him. Always Susie was in company

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with her aunt, or by her side he found one of the neighbor's children, a boy of about eight years—a terrible child! all eyes, ears, and tongue. We all know just such; and Jimmie was one that Lawyer Aiken did not like to have about at that time. There was no getting him out of the way; all of the wily lawyer's attempts were fruitless.

Lawyer Aiken was getting very much annoyed at the unexpected delay in his plans, and determined to make a chance the next time he visited Mrs. Gleason's.

She is truly very pretty! Bright looking; very fine complexion; beautiful teeth. Aye, I think I may feel quite sure her beauty is real, bestowed by nature, not paid for with money. Yes, she is the wife for me," said the worthy lawyer. And then, after a few moments of deep thought, he said again, "To be sure I have only seen her in those miserable dark rooms. I wonder why on earth folks will persist in keeping out the Lord's greatest blessings, the sun and light! Yes, I've seen her several times on the street. There, of course, she must have on, as they all do, a provoking vail, thin enough to make them look pretty, thick enough to hide the defects. I guess, however, there is no doubt about her. She is sweet tempered, I know. How kindly she speaks to every one! Well, well, I'll see what to-morrow will offer."

The lawyer was seated by Mrs. Gleason's chair the next day, watching for the coming of Susie.

He soon heard steps in the passage, and thought her coming, when Kitty the cook's voice, in low apologetic tones, reached his ear.

Her words were cut short by others, high-toned, sharp, threatening, and although very unlike her usually sweet voice, unmistakably Susie's. A moment more a fall, a tumbling, and final landing at the bottom of the steps, of something or somebody, followed by Kitty's voice groaning considerably.

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Struck dumb with amazement, Lawyer Aiken gazed inquiringly from Mrs. Gleason to Aunt Ada. The latter, speaking quietly, to relieve her sister's anxiety and surprise, said:

"Do not be frightened. I think it is only Kitty's awkwardness. I will see."

She was opening the door for that purpose, when in came Jimmie, saying:

"Susie pushed Kitty down stairs! and it served her right too; she went and let Susie's—"

A little push from Aunt Ada sent him back through the door, which she shut again, and Mrs. Gleason said:

"I am quite uneasy about Susie; she has been so irritable these last few days I know she must be ill. She is usually, indeed always, so sweet and lovely in disposition!"

Lawyer Aiken soon after took his departure. On the door-step he found Jimmie. Calling him to go get some candy, and succeeding in coaxing him away from the house, he inquired what Kitty had done to vex Susie.

"Why, the horrid Kitty let Susie's beautiful curls all burn up in the oven of the kitchen stove!" said Jimmie.

"Susie's curls in the oven! Susie's curls off her head!" gasped the lawyer.

Jimmie got his candy and went back, and the lawyer forward with his reflections:

"Well, after all, I need not mind about the curls, for I remember my mother's curls were off her head, on combs. That was the style then. I'll not worry about that. Gerald spoke of her being spirited, and quick at repartee. I can certify she is the first, and I guess Kitty thinks she is quick with hands as well as tongue. However, it is very well to have a wife who will make her servant fear her somewhat. Of course, I shall have to curb and direct that."

The next day again found Lawyer Aiken at Mrs. Glea-

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son's. Obeying the direction to "walk right up," he entered the room by one door, in time to hear the sound of flying feet, and catch a glimpse of Susie's blue dress, as it was hastily drawn through the opposite door.

Jimmie was there! Dreadful Jimmie! who, laughing and clapping his hands, sang out:

"Susie's run away. She wasn't fixed up."

"Fixed up!" The words jarred unpleasantly on the lawyer's ear. His mind was filled with strange misgivings.

Mrs. Gleason wanted a certain paper examined. Aunt Ada was asked to get it. Just then she was untangling a skein of silk, and directed Mr. Aiken to find it in one of the bureau drawers—she thought the top one.

Quickly the lawyer sprang to do her bidding. Drawing open the drawer, he looked in; starting back, he partly pushed the drawer to, then drew it out again, and gazed into it, with an expression of the most intense amazement.

"Do you see it, Mr. Aiken?" asked Aunt Ada.

"See! No, madam! I see nothing! I mean, I see all, everything," answered the lawyer, looking at her as if he had just awoke from a dream.

"Let me look," said Aunt Ada; and going to the drawer, she said, as if much annoyed:

"Dear me! How very thoughtless I am!" and closing quickly the drawer, she opened the next one, and drew out the paper.

The lawyer acted very strangely, and Mrs. Gleason feared he was not well, and kindly expressed her anxiety. Mr. Aiken looked hastily over the manuscript, and promising to call soon again and look over it more carefully, bade them good morning.

Three weeks after Lawyer Aiken's last visit, Gerald came to see Susie, his face really beaming with happiness.

"Victory, Susie, dear! I have uncle's permission to marry you as soon as I, or rather you, please!"

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"Do tell us about it, Gerald!" said Aunt Ada.

"I will. Well, he called me in, and asked me if I believed Miss Gleason was any different from all the other girls of the time. I answered that I knew she was a true woman, and I cared for nothing more."

"'Go ahead, then. I'll not stand in your way; nor will I find eyes for you either, sir. But I would advise that you'll go some time when you are not expected, and get a peep at your lady-love, or rather, what there is of her that is nature's. Ha! ha! ha! Go on, my boy!' And so here I am, Susie."

"What can he mean, I wonder?"

Aunt Ada was convulsed with laughter then; and motioning the happy pair to follow, proceeded to Mrs. Gleason's room. It was unoccupied; Susie having persuaded her mother to let Kitty walk with her in the garden.

Aunt Ada went to the bureau, and opening the top drawer, called Susie to look in. No wonder the lawyer had started back in almost terror. Susie's great blue eyes grew larger, and quite wild in expression; and then, after a few seconds, mirth played about her ruby lips, and she laughed out, calling Gerald to come and see.

And so must we, for it is quite time we all knew the contents of that drawer. But Gerald must bring them out. First he placed on the bureau an immense chignon, with curls long, short, heavy, and wavy; braids thick and thin. Then a box with the top off, containing all the mysteries of enamelling. Next a glass of water in which was a full set of teeth. A second more and another glass; when, as he drew it forth, he gave vent to such a peal of laughter that Kitty came flying up to see if her services were needed to eject a lunatic or go for the police.

Catching sight of the glass with its contents in Gerald's hand, she cried out:

"Oh, shure! and it's the doctor yer callin' for. Whose

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eye has popped out? Oh! and its alive, shure!" she continued, as Gerald slightly shook the glass, causing the motion.

Yes, it was really a glass eye. What next Gerald might have drawn forth I cannot tell. But Aunt Ada closed the drawer, saying:

"Would not a peep in there have frightened you off?"

"Not a bit! I know many ladies have to supply such deficiencies, and I guess they find some one to love them. Besides, the old gentleman said he was after beauty of the mind and heart. Oh, it is a capital joke, Aunt Ada! And when he finds out, he can only blame himself. How can we thank you?"

"I know. One good turn deserves another. You must try and send your uncle to Aunt Ada to get comforted," said Susie; and she added mischievously, "You had an eye to the future—you know you had, Aunt Ada—when you were damaging my prospects."

Susie and Gerald were soon after united, and not until then did the lawyer find out his mistake. And sure enough, he found comfort in Aunt Ada's society. And after making quite sure that the contents of the drawer did not belong to her, he made her Mrs. Aiken. And then she told him how he had been tricked. Merrily then he laughed with the rest, but insisted, with Susie, that Aunt Ada knew what she was after. And all agreed that if the *heart* is true, what matters aught else?

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THAT OLD MAID.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.—WORDSWORTH.

THE first remembrance I have of my mother must have been when I was about three years old, of romping and chasing butterflies through the beautiful grounds surrounding our home, with a young girl, my constant companion and playmate. I can perfectly remember the old nurse, who seemed to have as much care of her as myself, trying to make me call my pretty playmate "Mamma," instead of "Rosie," as I always did.

Of my father, nothing is clear. Indeed, I do not remember ever having one, until I was led into the great drawing-room one day, and lifted up to gaze on "my father," they said. Very well, even now, long years as it has been, can I remember the feeling of awe and fright which possessed me when, as they bade me, I pressed my lips on that pale, cold brow. "Dead," they said he was. I was very lonesome for some time after that, for my pretty mamma no longer played with me. She was quiet, and her merry, laughing voice was hushed. To this day I have a horror of black.

My first thoughts of care, or sorrow, were commenced then, and seemed to me entirely attributable to the black garb

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which clothed every one I loved. But gradually the gloom wore away, and again Rosie and I were happy. I did not, and would not, call her mamma, or mother, until I grew to be a big boy; and then only before the other boys or strangers. The idea of that beautiful young girl being my mother, I could never understand. My grandmother was with us. She was the mother I claimed. I loved her dearly, and was proud of her. Her matronly beauty and gentle dignity fully satisfied my ideas of what a *boy's* mother *should be.*

When I became old enough to understand, I learned much from my old nurse. She told me my mother was a child when her parents gave her to my father, who was many, many years older than her. But he was immensely rich, and loved the pretty child; and so they were well pleased when General Neville wooed their daughter.

And she, the child wife, was happy in the old man's love; and afterwards with her babe. She never had cause to regret her marriage, and sincerely mourned my father's loss. She was only little more then twenty when he died, and I about five years old.

I was never separated from her for one day until I was eighteen. I attended a preparatory school near home, up to that time, and then came the separation. I was sent to college. It was a severe trial for me to leave her—mother, friend, companion, all, to me. Often I have heard friends laugh, and say something about another love coming to both, and separating us; that mother was young, and would surely marry again. I did not feel very uneasy; for knowing she had been a widow thirteen years, I thought if, during that time, she had never known love for any other than her boy, I might rest easy about the future. However, I concluded to give her a word of warning when parting, and received her promise.

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"No, no, my boy; do not fear. Never will my heart wander from you. And you, Marcy, will be constant to your mother. We will live for each other, and spend our days here, in the old homestead, after your college life is over."

And so, pledged to each other, I went away satisfied.

My first vacation I returned home, and found my mother more beautiful than ever, and had no cause to feel at all uneasy about any one winning her love from me. No gentleman visited the house but the family physician and the old lawyer, neither of whom could I regard with any suspicion, as they were both married men.

Returning home at the close of the second year, I found things a little different. Indeed, no lady in the neighborhood entertained so much company as my mother. She said to me:

"My dear Marcy, now that you are about entering society, it is necessary that I should secure the best friends for you and surround you by such as your dear father's wealth and his former position entitle you to. A year more, and you will leave your college and take your proper place among your fellow-men."

She made no allusion to our mutual pledge, and seemed to have forgotten it. Still I had no real cause then even, to be uneasy.

But among her guests was one I fancied my mother was a little more attentive to—a very handsome lawyer. And I felt perfectly sure he admired her very much.

Back again, for the last term, I went to my college. The months rolled swiftly by. Again was vacation near, when I received a letter from my mother which not only surprised me dreadfully, but comepletely put to flight any ideas of objecting, remonstrating, or pleading against what had been a dread during the last year, for it was then a reality. Thus she wrote:

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"DEAR MARCY — Believing the time will come when you will think, with me, that a bad promise had better be broken than kept, I take some comfort in the regret I feel in giving you sorrow, even for a little while. This morning I was married to one you have met. I have thought it better to give you so great a surprise, than the chance of objecting and remonstrating, which would not only be very unpleasant, but all in vain. Now, my dear son, do not worry. Be perfectly sure, when your mother gave her heart to the one whose wife she is, her love for her boy was not invaded. Nothing can change that, which is the purest, most lasting emotion of a woman's heart — her mother's love.

We are going for a little trip—probably shall be absent two months. My husband's sister, your maiden aunt, will help your grandma to make your time pass happily until our return, when, I trust, you will welcome me without any regrets, feeling sure your mother has secured happiness. I wish you would try and do likewise.

"Lovingly yours, ——."

Yes, it was the man I feared. In a storm of rage and disappointment I strode up and down the floor. I took my mother's picture from my bosom, and vowed never again to look on the face of her who, I thought, had treated me so cruelly. I resolved to write immediately to my lawyer, and have him demand a settlement of my father's estate; and when in possession of my portion, to leave the country. I would never again visit the "old homestead," then no longer home to me. Not only had my mother cruelly injured me, I thought, but added really insult, by speaking of my being entertained by her husband's sister, an old maid, my perfect abomination! I, that had all those years kept myself aloof from society, refused the numberless invitations to

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become acquainted with beautiful girls, to be left in the care of a spinster! Ugh! I could see her, in my "mind's eye," then, with her sharp little black eyes, long hooked nose, and cork-screw curls! Every day of forty years, I was sure. Go where she was? Not I—to be enticed into sewing-circle meetings, charity fairs, donation parties, and all such gatherings where maiden ladies generally flourished!

After a few days I grew calmer, and decided to return to my home, wait there my mother's coming, settle up my business, and then commence my travels. I did not write to apprise my grandmother of my coming, and so my arrival was unexpected. No one but the servants were home. I was disappointed at not being welcomed by my grandmother, but very much pleased to know I should be spared, at least for a few hours, the infliction I dreaded so much—my maiden aunt's efforts to entertain me. After making myself comfortable and presentable, I entered the drawing-room, drew a lounging-chair to the window, and seated myself in a position to command the road and see my grandmother when she would be coming home, which would be soon, the servants said.

I had watched possibly a half hour when I beheld, some considerable distance off, and coming at an almost flying rate, a female on horseback. Not grandmother, I felt sure, or my aunt. Neither of them would or could ride like that. As she came nearer, I beheld the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. Very young she seemed, with an abundance of long golden curls blown back from her fair face. On she came, up to the gate, and over, without seeming aware that such an obstacle had been in her way. I was so completely lost in admiration of the beautiful girl and her fine riding, that I did not hasten out and assist her to alight. When I remembered my duty, she was in the hall. I drew back into the recess of the window, as she entered the drawing-room. Tossing off her hat, she sank on the sofa, saying:

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"Dear me! it is awfully dull out here! I wonder when that young one is coming? I've been here a week now, and not a beau has crossed the threshold! But it is not likely that young gentlemen would find their way where they only expect to meet a grandma and a spinster of uncertain age."

Already, in those few moments, I had found some little excuse for my mother's loving some one besides her son. In fact, I was beginning to be reconciled to that. Indeed, I might say I was rather glad than otherwise, for it gave me the right to go and do likewise, which I would have no objection to, if I could win that vision of loveliness.

It is no use to go around the truth; I was in love at first sight! I thought, then, it was not just the thing to be hidden there, and hearing what she thought was only heard by herself; so I made a little noise with the chair, and advanced into the room.

A half-suppressed scream fell on my ear, and then she seemed about to fly, when I explained to her who I was, and so on.

With a beautiful smile, she held out her hand, and said:

"I feel as if I knew you very well, from your mother and grandmother I have heard so much of you. It is too bad you should have found no one here."

"I am very well reconciled *now* to that," I said, and meant it too. "You spoke of my mother. Then you are a friend of hers, and visiting here, I hope?" I continued.

A bright flush mantled her face as she answered:

"Yes, I am staying with your grandmother and—"

"My aunt," I said, finishing her reply. "Are you acquainted with that worthy lady, my mother's maiden sister?" I asked.

"Slightly. I met her here this week," she returned, with an arch smile.

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"Just as I thought. By that smile I was convinced that Miss Jerusha, or Patience, whatever her name was, was not a very desirable acquisition to any family.

Waiting the return of my grandmother, we became very well acquainted, Annie—she told me that was her name—and I.

Indeed, soon I felt as if I had known her all my life, she was so confiding and kind. We laughed merrily about my maiden aunt, and I plainly spoke my feelings with regard to that dreaded individual.

Soon my grandmother came, and formally presented me to my young friend, Miss Bell.

During the evening my grandmother informed me I should not be annoyed with the society of Miss Moreton—that was the maiden aunt's name—for several days, as she had gone to make a little visit in the neighborhood that day, not expecting my arrival, and it was probable she would not present herself to me perhaps for a week. How I rejoiced! I would make good use of the time during her absence.

Nearly two weeks had passed when, one morning, entering the breakfast-room, I beheld the long-dreaded person, I felt sure, seated with her back to me, the very picture of my imagination—the brown stuff dress, the very same cap—yes, my maiden aunt.

For a fortnight nearly I had been living too happy to expect it could last—such was not for earth—riding, walking, singing, and reading with sweet Annie Bell. Day and night was my heart filled with thoughts of her, and echoing the words my lips were continually whispering: "I love thee, I love thee, sweet Annie!" That morning I had determined to whisper to myself no longer, but speak out to her the dearest hopes of my heart.

No chance of another day's happiness then. *She* would

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be always prying about, and coming in just when I wished her in the moon. Well, I might as well face the cannon's mouth at once—I had a great deal rather; so, forward I went. I was glad Annie was not near, for one glance of her merry eyes would have upset my decorous conduct.

My grandmother arose to present me. I dared not raise my eyes. The introduction through, Miss Moreton said:

"I was dreadful sorry I was not home to welcome you. It is against my principles to disappoint anybody."

There was something in the voice that caused me to look up. I looked again, longer and nearer. What did I see? A clear, ringing laugh, followed by a low one from grandma, a chuckle from the servant, and, by the removal of the cap, spectacles, and false front hair, I was soon convinced that I was the object of an excellent joke.

"Your maiden aunt, young man—Miss Annabel Moreton! Are you not glad to make her acquaintance?" asked the laughing Annie.

There was no breakfast for me that morning; for as often as I was about to get a taste of anything, Annie's glance of mischief, or some of my remarks repeated in reference to the maiden aunt, would set me off in such a fit of laughter, that eating was impossible.

After teasing me to her heart's content, she fled to the garden; I followed, told her my love, and wooed her to be mine.

"What! would you marry your maiden aunt?" she laughing, asked.

All I answered I will not write here. And she, as it was "against her principles to disappoint any one," made me happy. Soon my mother returned. I welcomed her without one regret. During the evening of her return I noticed she watched Annie and me closely; and then she came and, putting her arms around me, whispered:

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"You can forgive me now, Marcy, and now know, that although we both have learned to love another, we are still as dear to each other. Is it not so, my boy?"

In my eyes she read the answer. She told me afterward that she had intended a pleasant little joke, and hoped for just such an ending. She wanted that I should be as happy as she was.

"And now, you think a bad promise had better be broken than kept, do you not, Marcy?" asked my mother.

"I think I do," I answered, and clasped mother and maiden aunt in one loving embrace.

A few months after, our relative positions were changed; and every hour since I have blessed the day that mother gave me in charge of my maiden aunt.

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A NIGHT OF TERROR.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

As the hall door closed, after the departure of a visitor of Mrs. Graham's, Nettie exclaimed:

"Why, mamma, how very odd it is that your friend, who looks so young and pretty, with such an exquisite complexion, and bright, laughing eyes, should have such gray—no, *white* hair! Why, I don't think there is a dark hair in her head; and she has such an abundance of it too!"

"Yes, Nettie, it does look odd, for one so young—she is a little over thirty—to have such hair. Hers is one of those strange incidents that you have often heard of, and now have seen, where one hour of terror has accomplished most effectually the work of long years; aye, probably the snow of seventy winters would not have so bleached her raven locks as we see them now."

"How long has she been so? What caused it? Mamma, do you know? Please tell me all you can about her. Isn't she a tiny woman! I've seen girls of twelve larger."

"How you rattle on, Nettie! Now keep quiet, and I will tell you all about it.

"Ten years ago, in Virginia, where the nearest neighbors lived at least a mile apart, Mary Southern passed the first years of her married life. Her husband being a lawyer, was necessarily much from home, attending court, which was in session in the town of——, fifteen miles from their home. Always going with him to the gate, and with a bright smile

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bidding him good-bye, Mary would watch her husband ride off, to be absent two or three days, as his business was more or less pressing.

"One memorable morning in the month of August, Mary, with her babe in her arms, and another little three-year old child clinging to her hand, followed to bid her husband good-bye. As she raised her face to his, and put up her lips to give and receive his parting kiss, he for the first time noticed that the sweet smile was wanting. On her fair face rested an expression of great anxiety, and he asked:

"'What is it, dear? Something to say, and are not quite sure that it is not childish, eh? Afraid of being laughed at? Come, out with it!'

"'No, not that; but I am afraid of worrying you—that is, making you feel uneasy or sorry about leaving us, if I speak. But, oh! Harry, I *do* feel worse about your going this time than ever before,' she answered, her eyes filling with tears.

"'Why, you are nervous, sure enough. What is the cause? Tell me, love.'

"'Oh, it is very foolish, no doubt. But last night, you know, we heard that Watt Wolf had escaped.'

"'Well, dear, if he has, you may be very sure he will not linger in this neighborhood. He is probably out of the State by this time.'

"'Harry, you have forgotten he has vowed vengeance on every one who had anything to do with his conviction, and particularly you,' said Mary in a tremulous voice.

"'Ha, ha, ha! Why, little woman, for that very reason, he will steer far away from here, thinking he would be expected. Rest easy. I'll come back to-night as you are anxious.'

"'No, no, no! I would not have you come through the woods at night for anything. It is for you I am so frightened. Do not come unless you can get off early.'

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"'You remember my engagement will keep me until eight. I will leave directly after, and be with you about ten.'

"'No, Harry, remain in town, and leave Trust here with us, and I shall feel easier.'

"'All right! Here, Trust!' he called, to a huge mastiff, who was waiting to accompany his master. The dog came up, and Harry placed his wife's hand on the noble animal's head, and said:

"'Take care of your mistress, old fellow! But, Mary, I assure you, you have no cause for alarm. Now, good-bye.'

"Trust reluctantly followed his mistress home. He was disappointed, it was very evident. But he was ever true to his name, and Mary felt that he would do as his master bade him.

"The manifold duties of the day soon diverted her thoughts, and she grew busy and cheerful again. And so, forgetting the fears of the morning, she gave all the servants, with one exception—the nurse—permission to attend a party given by some of the neighboring servants.

"The babe was sleeping sweetly, and little Harry sitting on the piazza, watching the road, when the nurse called:

"'Come, Harry, get your supper; and then we will go give the chickens theirs.'

"'No; Harry's looking for papa. Harry wants papa to come. Something hurt mamma, if papa don't come!' answered the child, still eagerly watching the road.

"'Little Harry had heard the conversation of the morning, and it had evidently made a deep impression on his mind. When his mother heard his reply, all the alarm she had felt came back with redoubled force, and she began to regret that she had not urged her husband to get excused from his engagement and return home early in the evening.

"Little Harry continued calling for his 'papa,' and Mary

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grew every moment more miserable. Suddenly a wild thought entered her mind.

"Oh, why could not her husband hear the call? Perhaps he might. The infant's cry, borne on the breeze to his ear, would surely bring him home. Glancing at the clock, she saw it was just seven. If he would only start now, he would reach home by nine, she thought.

"'Call papa, Harry, and mother will ask God to send him home to us,' she said. And as little Harry's lisping tones floated out on the night wind, his mother's fervent prayer ascended to Heaven.

"'Thou who knowest all things, direct him. Send him home to us, or stay his footsteps, whichever seems best in Thy sight!' she prayed.

"Still watching and waiting, little Harry sat until his eyes grew weary, and murmuring, 'Papa coming!' his head drooped, and he sank to sleep on the door-step.

"Gently taking him up and placing him on the sofa, Mary said to the nurse:

"'Do not disturb him. We will awake and undress him when his father comes, or when I am ready to retire.'

"It was a glorious night: the moon shining so brightly that it was almost as light as noon-day. And as they sat on the piazza, everything about, and far up the road, was plainly visible.

"Cassie, the nurse, noticing her mistress was uneasy, endeavored to divert her mind by many amusing anecdotes. And after an hour and more spent so, she stepped in the house a moment, returning with a very fine water-melon, and placed it, with a large knife, before Mary.

"Scarce had she opened the melon, when a low growl from Trust caused both Mary and the nurse to look anxiously about. Nothing, however, could they see. But the dog continued his uneasiness.

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"A moment more, and, to their horror, they beheld emerging from behind a cluster of lilac bushes, a huge dark figure.

"Furiously Trust barked then. And when the man, with quick and noiseless step, approached the house, the faithful creature, with a bound, reached and sprung upon the intruder. Another second and a knife gleamed in the moonlight.

"'Trust, off, off, sir! Here! here!' cried Mary. Terrified though she was, her thoughts were swift and bright. Another instant and that sharp steel would reach the faithful heart. She must save him while there was any hope, or until the last moment.

"As Trust, with continued growls, drew off and stationed himself beside his mistress, the dreaded man approached. The hearts of both mistress and maid were appalled. There was no mistaking the truth. Watt Wolf, the outlaw, the house-breaker and burner, the murderer, the robber, the terror of the State, stood before them!

"With a fiendish leer he looked on them, and asked:

"'Do you know me? Or shall I introduce myself?'

"With a powerful effort, Mary tried to conceal her terror, and answered:

"'I never saw you before. I suppose, though, you are hungry, and want something to eat.'

"'Hungry! yes, by —— I am; and thirsty too!' and under his breath he muttered, 'thirsty for revenge!'

"'I will get you something to eat,' Mary said, starting to go in the house.

"'No, you are going to give the alarm. Oh, no, I know you are alone; alone, ha! You can go. Your husband is off for the night, and your servants all across the way, to a party.'

"'You are right. But why should I be alarmed? I am

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glad always, to feed the hungry, or help the needy. I never injured any one in my life. And you will not harm any one who is kind to you. Shall I get the food?' Mary answered, feigning a calmness, in order to delay his intent, whatever it might be, hoping for some relief.

"Oh, she was a brave little woman! And glancing in on her sleeping babes, her trembling heart grew stronger. And clasping more firmly, and trying at the same time to conceal the knife she had used to cut the melon, she determined to sell her life as dearly as possible.

"By one pretext and another, she delayed placing the food before him until he demanded it quickly.

"While he eat, his keen eyes were continually watching Mary and Cassie. Noticing one of the former's hands were concealed, he said:

"'What are you hiding there? Ha! a knife! What are you going to do with it?'

"'Cut some melon. I was about to do it when you came up.'

"'*Put it down now!*' he said, in a menacing tone.

"She laid it on the table, beside the fruit.

"At length he had finished eating, and pushed back his chair. Then, for the first time, Cassie's speech returned. She got up, and approaching, said:

"'Have a piece of this melon? Can I cut some, please, ma'am?' she asked, turning to Mary, and looking with eyes which told so much then.

"'Certainly. Take some, and give this man some. But wait; let me cut a nice piece for Mr. Southern first,' Mary answered, her heart gaining strength again from one hope—to get possession of the knife again.

"Both held knives then, and both knew the other's intent.

"'You are —— cool, or want to make out so. And you

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know that your husband will not come to eat that. And now I have not much time to spare. The servants will be coming soon. Now look at me, ladies! Watt Wolf!—bloody Watt, at your service! Now, Madam, you will come with me, and hand out your money and jewelry. I'll get that before going further,' said the fiend, approaching and putting out his hand to take hold of Mary.

"'Stand back!' cried she. And retreating a step or two back, she held high the knife. And Cassie sprang to her side, and called:

"'Now, Trust! Brave Trust! Help us!'

"They stood, the three, before him. They would fight to the death, he knew. He must change his movements. Separate them, and then he would conquer. He drew forth a pistol, and pointing it to the sleeping boy, said:

"Unless you do as I bid, I'll give that young one a long sleep. Now, what do you say? Quick!'

"Hark! A sound reaches their ears. Near and nearer it comes!

"'What's that?' demanded the wretch.

"'My husband!' Mary returned, never for an instant removing her eyes from the outlaw.

"'You lie!' he said, straining his ears to hear.

"Yes, it was the clatter of a horse's hoofs coming near, very near. The clang of the yard gate confirmed her joy, and his dismay.

"'Fool! to have stopped so long! But *this*—to remember Watt Wolf by!' And he fired the pistol which he held covering the little Harry.

"An agonizing cry, and Mary fell fainting to the floor, as the fiend rushed through the house and out the back way. Trust sprang after him. And Harry Southern, terrified by the report of the pistol, dashed in to find his wife lying apparently dead before him.

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"Cassie, in words scarcely intelligible from terror, made him understand what had happened. Little Harry was unhurt, but awakened by the report of the pistol, which his mother had struck upward at the instant Wolf had pulled the trigger, thus saving the child.

"Restoratives applied, Mary soon was sobbing with joy on her husband's bosom.

"He told her that when he started to fulfill his engagement, he was irresistibly drawn homeward. So deeply was he impressed to hasten, that he could not stop even to send an excuse.

"'For,' he continued, 'I could continually hear—imagine, of course—Harry calling me. And Spott, too, seemed to have caught my humor, for he almost flew home.'

"'What time was it, Harry, when you first felt so?' Mary asked.

"'A few moments after seven. What is it, love? You look so strangely!'

"'Harry, your boy *was* calling you then!' she answered solemnly.

"How strange! How very strange!" exclaimed Nettie. "They both had presentiments, had they not?"

"That was just what Harry Southern said to his wife, and I will answer you with her words. She said she knew but little about presentiments; but of faith and prayer she did. It was quite natural for her to be uneasy that morning, as she had good cause, as it had proved. But his coming home so impressed of the necessity, was surely God's answer to her prayers."

"And was the dreadful man caught?" asked Nettie.

"Yes, Harry went out to call Trust. And after some of the men returned, he went with them to hunt the faithful creature. At length, directed by low, piteous moans, they found him, badly cut in several places, but still clutching and

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holding to the ground the terrible outlaw, almost dead from the effects of his fight with Trust.

"He was taken back to jail, and afterward executed; having previously confessed his intention of completely desolating Harry Southern's home. Thus the country was delivered from the terrible outlaw.

"The next morning after that fearful night, when Mary Southern looked in her glass, it reflected the hair that a few hours before was of a raven hue, as you have seen it to-day."

"Oh, what a misfortune! I should never cease worrying over it. Does she mind it, mamma?"

"No, not at all. I've heard her husband say to her, 'those silvery locks were a constant reminder of what a brave little wife he had.' And in his eyes, I am sure she is far more beautiful than ever before that terrible night."

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THE LOST LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Hast thou gone sadly through a dreary night,
And found no light,
No guide, no star to cheer thee through the plain,
No friend, save pain?
Wait, and thy soul shall see, when most forlorn,
Rise a new morn."

THE wheel of the sewing machine suddenly ceased, the little hands fell heavily in her lap, and the wavy brown head of Lilly Peters sank wearily on the table before her.

"Are you so very tired, dear?" asked a sweet, low voice close by.

"Tired! Yes; but not as you are—heart-sick and weary. Will this constant toiling never cease? Oh, I am starving, dying!—not so much for food as air—the pure, fresh air, the blessed sunshine—I tell you, May."

She turned as she called her sister's name. A pang of regret touched her heart then, and stopped the rebellious words that were trembling on her lips. She saw May, so frail, so wan, still plying her needle—stopping only an instant to press her hand to her side, either to stop the wild throbbing of her heart, or to vainly attempt to ease the constant aching there. Lilly felt how much better she was able to toil on than her sister. And when she thought of her cry, "Oh, will this constant toiling never cease?" her heart was trembling with fear, lest too soon May's toil would end. Dear May! Gentle, patient, long-suffering May!

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A tear had stolen unbidden to her eye when Lilly's first murmur reached her ear; but she drove it back. She had no time to weep. Ah, no; poor sewing girls have no time to weep!

"Will this constant toiling never cease?"

When Lilly said that a smile of angelic sweetness broke over her pale face, she knew rest must come soon; rest, if not here, where it would be more perfect. Lilly saw the smile, and divining from whence it came, arose quickly from her seat, and with a dexterous movement succeeded in getting from May, the work, and with her own folded it, putting it away in the closet, closed the door, locked it, and and putting the key in her pocket, said:

"No more work this afternoon. I am determined to have you out in the country this beautiful sunshiny day. Up now, and get ready. Quickly, love!"

"Lilly, you are wild, child! That dress is promised, or rather demanded, for the day after to-morrow. It will take every hour of the time we have to work, to finish it. Give me the key, dear!"

"Indeed, I will not! Wild, you say? Yes, I am wild for a breath of fresh air; wild to enjoy God's blessed sunshine! wild, as a bird, for the green fields and trees! and I will have a few hours of freedom, even if it cost me the cost of madam's patronage. I have two dollars, which will give us a ride out of town, with some fresh milk, and berries too. I will trust to Heaven for more money or work if I lose Madam's. May, dear, don't look at me so! We will have the dress done in time. We can work all the faster for some recreation. Do come, darling! I am fully determined to free you for a few hours, you poor little caged bird!"

May was about to reply, when she was suddenly interrupted by a knock at the door, opening which, Lilly beheld two young ladies, the foremost of whom asked:

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"Is it here I shall find Mademoiselle Marie St. Pierre?" holding forth a card on which was written that name.

Now little May Peters would most likely have sent off the ladies in ignorance of the whereabouts of any such person, had it not been that when she first obtained employment of Madame Bouvet, she informed her that only French girls were connected with her establishment. And Madame, feeling quite sure that May must be of French descent, as her name certainly was "St. Pierre, not Peters," Madame introduced her so, and only thus was she known there. So May, answering the inquiry, invited her visitors in.

An expression of much surprise passed over the handsome face of Miss Charleton, as she sank, apparently quite exhausted, into the chair presented her. After her journey up those long flights of steps to the little attic room, she scarce expected to meet beauty beside which she felt her own face must appear very commonplace—a girl whose quiet dignity and grace would adorn the most fashionable drawing-room. After recovering from her surprise, Miss Charleton explained to May the object of her visit. She had been to the establishment of Madame Bouvet, to change the order relative to the dress for the next evening.

"I have come from Madame to get you to stop work on my satin, which I shall not want to-morrow evening, but in its place a lace overdress, which will be very much less work," said Miss Charleton.

May bowed assent, and inquired:

"Have you the material with you? I will take your directions, if you please."

"O dear, no. Madame has the lace. I never could tell you about the style of making. She understands perfectly what suits me. And she wishes you to come as soon as possible to her, and take the order. By the bye, will you let me see how you are trimming the satin? Madame said it was very elegant," said Miss Charleton.

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Lilly unlocked the closet and handed to her sister the dress, which called forth an exclamation of delight from the owner. Quickly drawing off her gloves, she held the dress up, gazing with marked admiration on the exquisite taste of the trimming. As her jewelled fingers still lingered amid the folds of rich material, May's eyes caught the flash from a sparkling gem. In an instant the waves of crimson tide rushed over her face, and quickly receding, left her paler than before. As she put forth her hand to grasp, for support, the chair beside her, Miss Charleton exclaimed:

"Come, we are losing time. Will you go to Madame immediately, please?"

Lilly's quick eye had noticed May's increasing pallor, and springing to her side, she placed her arms tenderly about her, and said:

"I do not think my sister can go. See, she is really ill now. I was about to get her out into the fresh air for a little rest when you came."

"How provoking!" exclaimed Miss Charleton.

"How distressing!" the young lady who had accompanied her said, coming up, and looking with a pitying eye on the suffering girl beside her.

In a low, tremulous voice, May said:

"Yes, I can go. After a little, I shall get better."

"I think so. Do give her a glass of wine, and she will soon get stronger," Miss Charleton said, turning to Lilly, who quickly filled a glass with water, and held it to her sister's lips. Raising her eyes to the rich girl's, she said in a quivering voice, while a cold, bitter smile was on her face:

"This is the only wine found in the home of the sewing girl."

"I shall be well when I get out into the air. Do not worry, dear," May said. And slowly rising from her chair, she continued, "Now give me my hat and gloves."

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"Julia—here a moment," said Miss Charleton's companion, moving a little aside.

A low conversation for a few moments passed between the two, Miss Charleton seeming rather reluctant to accede to the other—her cousin's—wish. At length she said:

"Well—I suppose I must. You go. I must hurry home."

Turning again to May, who was then ready to start, she said:

"My carriage is below. You better ride to Madame's with my cousin. You will save time."

"And the ride will do you good. Come," said the gentler girl, taking Mary kindly by the hand.

Lilly, ever impulsive, came forward, a sweet, grateful smile wreathing her lips, and said:

"How kind, how good you are! Oh, if others were like you! Yes, the ride will do her good. Thank you, so much."

Miss Charleton was descending the stairs. She cared not to hear the thanks of which she knew she merited no portion.

"I will bring her back to you. She shall not walk. Do not be uneasy; I will take good care of your sister," the kind girl said.

They were gone, and Lilly sat down—not to work, but think. "How different they are! Both moving in the same world of fashion; equally rich, I should think, and yet so unlike. The one, so cold and selfish; the other, all gentleness, sympathy, and pity! Then, among the rich, one can find some with hearts. How I love her! Yes, she can feel for her suffering sister woman," Lilly thought. And so it was. Those two, born equally alike to enjoy all the advantages of wealth, were so different. Although there is too much truth in the saying that "only the poor can feel for

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the poor," yet, thank heaven, it is not so rare a thing as Lilly thought, to find angels of mercy and pity among the rich. Many of the noblest natures, the loveliest and most unselfish spirits, are found among the wealthy women of our land.

Lilly and May Peters were the daughters of a man of education and refinement. Once, in the days of his children's infancy, he was quite wealthy; but reverses came. With a small remnant of his former possessions, he removed to a distance from the scenes of his better days, and endeavored to win a support for his family. Ill health and continued misfortune seemed never to tire in their attendance on him until, when his daughters were just grown to womanhood, his days of sorrow were over.

A year before her father's death, May's beauty and grace had attracted the attention of a young man visiting the village in which they lived. Constantly he sought her society, until she grew to love him with all the devotion of her pure, loving nature. For some unknown reason, Mr. Peters distrusted his daughter's lover, who was a man apparently of wealth, and endeavored to induce her to banish him from her heart and sight. The man whose life had been one of continued disappointments had but little faith in his fellow-man. A few weeks previous to his leaving his children orphans, he saw on May's finger a beautiful and costly ring. Divining immediately from whom it came, he said:

"Give it back, my May. Such a jewel ill becomes the child of poverty."

The good girl would not cause even an imaginary trouble to press upon her father's mind, and so gave back to her lover the costly gem. But in its place he put a plain circlet, which would not attract her father's attention.

"Wear that, May," he said, "until I place another on

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your finger, one which will give me the right to deck you with all the jewels I choose."

Soon after he went back to his city home, with the promise from May, when he returned again in the autumn, he should claim her as his bride.

"When your father finds out how truly I love you, how earnest and determined I am to win you, he will trust in and give you to me, I know; and I will make his remaining days happier than the past, my May."

These were his parting words. But when the autumn days were come, May's heart grew anxious and sad. But one letter had reached her from her lover, and the appointed time went by. The winter days drew near, and still he came not. Poverty pressed sorely on the poor girls. Something they must find to do, or soon they should be without the means to obtain bread. And so they sold their little effects, and went to the great city to obtain work. A year and more had passed, when our story finds the sisters in their comfortless little room, toiling for the merest necessaries of life.

While May was showing to Miss Charleton her dress, on that lady's finger she beheld the ring that had once been hers. The mystery of her lover's long silence was to her fully explained then. He either had never or no longer loved her. The girl who wore that ring was surely his betrothed. This it was that had caused the poor girl's sudden illness.

A couple of hours had passed before May returned. After she had taken the order from Madame, the kind girl, Miss Charleton's cousin, insisted on giving her a longer ride. So when Lilly caught her sister in her arms, as she entered the room, she saw she was much revived, but an additional look of sadness was in her dark eye. And soon the anxious, loving sister knew the cause. May told her all.

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A half hour after, when Lilly was putting on the table their meagre meal, a knock announced another caller. Opening the door, she saw Miss Charleton's coachman, who, stepping in, relieved himself from an armful of bundles, bowed, and said:

"Miss Dora's compliments." Then quickly closed the door, and ran down the steps.

Lilly hastened to untie the parcels, displaying a bottle of wine, a dozen large oranges, a box of delicious strawberries, and a bundle of delicate light crackers. Tears of grateful emotion filled the eyes of the sisters, and Lilly said:

"How kind and thoughtful she is! Now, darling, you will have both the ride and fruit. You will be quite strong after I give you a glass of this wine. Heaven bless the dear, kind Miss Dora! I wonder what her other name is?"

"I do not know; but she seems strangely near to me. Somehow I feel no delicacy in receiving her gifts. She says she is going to her country home in a few days, and if we will come to her, she will give us work through the summer months," May answered.

"Oh, I am so glad—so glad! Then you will grow stronger and well. Oh, May, brighter days are coming to us. Oh, why don't you clap your hands, and let me hear one of your old merry, happy laughs again? My darling, I am wild with delight, to think once more we shall breathe the pure air, hear the birds sing, and roam through green fields! Yes, you will surely get quite well then."

May tried, for her sister's sake, to seem pleased; but her heart was very sad.

The next afternoon, when the lace overdress was finished, May carried it to Madame, who told her she must go with it herself to Miss Charleton, that she might make any alterations, if necessary. May would have demurred, but Madame's wish was not to be disregarded. And so the poor girl proceeded to the home of Miss Charleton.

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Dora Walton's kind heart was deeply interested in the beautiful sewing girl. And she talked so much of her, on her return to her cousin's that her brother said:

"I declare, Dora, I am quite anxious to see this girl who seems to have gained such a strange hold on your heart so speedily. You have talked about her until I am very much interested in her. Tell me her name?"

"Marie St. Pierre," Dora answered.

And a look of disappointment came over the handsome face of her brother, as if some scarcely definable hope had entered and been suddenly banished from his heart.

When May entered Miss Charleton's boudoir, she was received by Dora in a really affectionate manner, and her proud cousin wondered how Dora could be so familiar to her seamstress.

The beautiful dress was found to need no change. It was perfect.

As May's little hands were busy looping up the falls of rich lace, and arranging the clusters of flowers amidst them, the plain gold ring, that had never been removed since her lover placed it there, slipped from her finger, which had grown so thin of late, and fell, as she thought, on the floor. In vain she sought it, and with Dora's help. But it was nowhere to be found. Poor May! she thought it was ominous. And with a sigh she tried to reconcile herself, thinking, "What matter is it the ring is lost, when his heart is mine no longer!"

"We will surely find it to-morrow, and I will bring it to you," said Dora, as she bade May good-bye.

Julia Charleton was dressed, ready to start for the ball. The elegant lace robe was a present from Dora's brother, and he was called to inspect and admire it, before Julia put on her wrappings.

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"Is it not exquisite, Harry?" Julia asked, as she turned before his admiring eye.

"It is beautifully arranged. But what is this? said Harry Walton, stooping and disengaging from the tendrils of the the flowers May's little ring.

It was only a plain gold circlet, differing not at all from many others he had seen. Yet it seemed strangely familiar to Harry Walton. He looked eagerly to the inside, and cried out:

"Tell me—how came this here?"

"My dress-maker, Mademoiselle St. Pierre, dropped it while arranging the flowers, and could not find it after," Julia answered, gazing with astonishment at her cousin.

His eyes were glowing with a bright, hopeful light, and when Dora drew near, and whispered:

"What is it, Harry?" he said:

"My dear little sister, I might have thought before of this. Yet 'tis not strange that I did not imagine the French seamstress, Marie St. Pierre, could be my lost love, May Peters. Tell me—where shall I find her? Julia, I will accompany you, and return for you. But in the intervening hours I must find her, my poor stricken love!"

It was rather difficult for Julia to hide her disappointment. She had a feeling something more than cousinly lingering in her heart for the handsome Harry. And although she knew the story of his love, still she had a hope of finally winning him.

May's head rested on the little stand beside her. The work had dropped from her tired fingers. Never before had she felt so sad. No longer a hope of her lover's return lingered in her heart. Lilly, ever watchful, thought her sleeping, and putting aside her own work, turned low and shaded the light, that May might not be disturbed by the glare.

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Scarcely had she seated herself again, when a low knock reached her ear. Thinking it her next neighbor, she opened it cautiously, and whispered, "Hush-sh," pointing to May. "She is sleeping." She smothered the cry of surprise which was on her lips. May had heard the knock and Lilly's whispered warning, but she cared not to arouse from her sad reverie. When the door was gently closed, and no sound reached her ear, the profound silence excited somewhat her curiosity, and she raised her head to see if Lilly had gone out.

There, in the dim light, she saw standing near, and gazing lovingly on her, a tall, manly form. Could she be dreaming? She passed her hand over her eyes and looked again. No, no, it was no dream. With a glad cry she put forth her arms, and was clasped to Harry Walton's heart—a moment only; and with a feeble struggle she withdrew from his embrace, and stood apart, pale, trembling and doubting.

"What is it, love? Why do you look so strangely at me? See, I have found your little ring; or, rather, I think it found and brought me to you. Dear little ring!" he said, pressing it to his lips. "Let me put it back, love?"

He attempted to take her hand. She drew further off and whispered:

"Miss Charleton wears your ring."

"What ring, love," he asked; and in an instant after continued: "Oh, your ring! Dora has had it, and my cousin teased her to loan it to her. Oh, I know now why you look so strangely. That cruel ring made you doubt me, May. You have no cause, my darling. My heart has never wandered for an instant from you. Come to me? I will never lose you again. How pale and thin you are!"

The little ring was in its place again, and May in hers—within his arms—telling her sorrows, and hearing the long mysterious silence explained.

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Harry told her that immediately after his return to New York he was summoned to Europe on pressing business. He wrote, telling May of it, and begging her to write to the address he sent her. This letter she never received, and consequently he heard nothing from May in return. Again and again he wrote, with no better success. In the meantime the sisters had left their village home, where he sought them on his return from Europe. And thus it was he lost her.

May had her suspicions about the receipt of Harry's letters, but she did not tell them. All was well then, and she too happy to indulge in even a thought that was not kind and charitable. But Lilly did not hesitate, when alone with her sister, to accuse the village postmaster, who had sought in vain for May's love.

The next day the sisters left their miserable room, and went with Dora to the beautiful country home, to remain a few weeks her loved and honored guests. And then there was a quiet little wedding; and Harry took his wife across the ocean, leaving Lilly to the charge of Dora.

Her husband's loving care and change of scene brought back to May much of her strength; but she had suffered so much, its traces must ever be seen. Dora is scarcely less watchful and devoted to her new sister than Lilly has ever been. And she knows now why it was she loved May, and won an immediate return, when she first knew her. Harry was the connecting link between them.

The sad experience of May and Lilly has not been without its good effects. Dora's circle of acquaintances is very extensive, and among the votaries of fashion she has diffused her knowledge of the trials and suffering of the sewing girls, and has succeeded in having the liberal price paid for work reach the hands of those who earn it, not to the proprietors of the fashionable establishments by whom the poor girls

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are employed, and paid only sufficient to keep body and soul together in a state of torturing existence, while Madame or Monsieur rear their palatial mansions—monuments in memory of hundreds of starving and dying widows and orphans.

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DOOMED.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

EVERY person at the South End knew Dick Allen, or Daring Dick, as he was better known, either by sight or reputation. He was the aversion of all good boys, the horror of their mothers, and the constant dread of all the owners of market gardens or well-filled chicken coops. And it invariably happened, if countless ears of corn just ready for use were stolen one night, the next morning either a little strip of husk from the missing article, or a few strands of silk, were sure to be found tangled in Dick's neglected locks, or somewhere sticking to his clothes. He always denied the theft. But who ever believed a word Dick said? He had slept many nights in the station-house, and once or twice had narrowly escaped a criminal indictment. Dick was always suspected, and appearances were always against him. Still nothing very dreadful had ever been clearly proven against him, expect that his associates were very bad boys and worse men.

Poor Dick was without a friend: those who called themselves so being really his worst enemies. Dick bore the odium for their misdeeds, and sometimes the penalty. How often we see it thus—persons whose destiny seems to be continual suffering for the faults of others.

Dick was an orphan. No one claimed him, and he knew of no living relative. He lived with a very doubtful char-

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acter, Pete Cooper, who mended tins and told fortunes for his living.

Dick had never been very merry, but of late he had grown gloomy. He spent hours alone, with his elbows on his knees and head resting on his hands, thinking—plotting mischief, his companions thought; sullen and lazy, Pete Cooper declared.

One day in the early spring, when Pete's business was very dull, he drove Dick forth, telling him to go and turn a penny by *some* means. Money must be had. So the poor boy started in quest of some employment.

In vain, from one place to another, he tried. No one who knew him would give him a job. At length, far off from his usual haunts, he saw several men clearing up, sodding and trimming the trees and plants in the grounds surrounding an elegant residence. He made up his mind to ask to be allowed to help.

"But what's the use?" he said. "It will be like with all the others I've asked. Everybody hates me, and frowns on me, and tells me begone! I do try to be good, but it ain't a bit of use. All the world says I'm bad; and so I'll have to be, as long as I'm in it. And Pete Cooper says I'm bound to be hung. What *he* says must come true, for he is the seventh son, he tells everybody. Bound to be hung! The stars told him I was! If I am, it will be sure to be for somebody else. Lord, please save me! I don't mind dying for somebody else, but not that way. I've hardly slept an hour since he told me that; I'm thinking of it all the time. I wonder if God thinks I'm so bad? He knows I never did anybody any harm in my life; but never no good either, I s'pose. I dreamed last night that mother was calling me to come to her. Oh, if I could only go! if I could only do a good turn for somebody, and then die!"

He was leaning against the iron railing, when the door

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of the great house opened, and a gentleman and lady came out and descended the steps. The gentleman's face was cold and stern, but his companion's gentle, sweet and beautiful. Dick noticed that, and started toward her to beg for work.

"Please, lady," he began, when the gentleman, raising his cane, exclaimed:

"Be off with you, you young vagabond!"

"Oh, my dear, don't speak so harshly. See how miserably he looks, poor boy!'

"Nonsense. He has a miserable *bad* look, I see. The young rascal is just loitering about, watching a chance to get in and steal something. Be off, before I call a policeman."

Dick drew off, frightened at the threat. The gentleman turned to give some directions to the workmen, and then the poor boy looked round. He wanted another glimpse of the gentle, sweet lady. She was looking at him—a sad, pitying expression was on her face. She caught his eye, and hastily opening her pocket-book, dropped close to the marble steps, unseen by any one but Dick, a note. He knew it was for him. A grateful look from him, a sweet acknowledging smile from her, and she passed from his sight.

Returning, our poor boy picked up the note—a large sum for him to own, one dollar—and started off; but came back again, to spell out the name on the door plate.

"I couldn't go without knowing her name. She'll be going from this world soon, I know. Angels don't live on earth. How I'd like to die for her! I don't mind what he said. I'm used to that kind of talk. He couldn't help it. There's something about me that makes 'em all talk so. But what *she* said makes me feel queer. A smile for Dick! a kind word! money! But what of that? Money I don't care for. But the look she give me! The first kind word

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since mother died I've got to-day. May be she'll think of me to-night, when she says her prayers."

He was walking along, thinking of the beautiful lady all the time, except now and then another thought would steal back to his mind, and a shiver through his veins, as he murmured:

"Oh no! Good Lord, save me from *that!* Any other way to die—"

"Dick! Dick Allen!" called near, aroused him from his reveries. Glancing round, he saw an old acquaintance, Bolting Bill, who said:

"Come along. You look tired and hungry. I've raised the wind, and am going to stand a treat."

Yielding, as ever, to a stronger will, Dick followed his companion to an eating-house, the resort of the very worst characters in town.

It was near dark when they reached their destination. Dick had been wandering about since early dawn, and was very tired. After eating his supper, he grew sleepy, and was nodding in his seat, when the proprietor of the place said:

"Go in there and take a nap," pointing to a little room close by.

Dick did as he was told. How long he had slept he knew not, when he was aroused by hearing his own name spoken. Peeping around, he saw the room had two other occupants—one a stranger to him; the other he knew well, and dreaded too, for several times Dick had narrowly escaped being inveigled by that man into very grave offences.

Then he heard them planning the robbery of a house, where they were sure of getting well paid for the risk they might run.

The boy's ears were strained to catch every word. A name was mentioned—one with which was associated all his

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thoughts of heaven. It was that which he had seen on the door where his angel lady lived.

"Can we depend on this boy?" was asked in a low, cautious voice.

"I'll make him afraid not to do as we wish. But we'll wake him, and sound him. Dick, up with you!"

Dick took considerable shaking before he did as they bade him. And then he listened to their plans and proposals to him.

Alas for all his thoughts of trying to be a good boy! Either through fear, or some other motive, he readily and willingly agreed. He was to go with them. They needed just such a wiry little elf to climb up and do as they would instruct him.

That night there had been a grand party at Mr. Clifton's. It was late before the guests had departed. The household were all completely tired out, and sank on their couches in heavy slumbers. It seemed to Mr. Clifton he had scarce closed his eyes, when he was aroused by the cry:

"Murder! Fire! Thieves!"

Ere he could spring from his bed the report of a pistol sounded through the hall. An instant after, a piercing cry —a child's voice—reached his ears. Bewildered and terrified, he caught up his dressing robe, turned on the gas, and ran out into the hall. All was still then, save low moans and difficult breathing in the lower hall. One and another terrified face appeared on the steps, and followed George Clifton as he descended and drew close to the form of a child lying on the velvet carpet, surrounded by a pool of blood.

As George Clifton gazed inquiringly on the little pale face, which seemed somewhat familiar to him, the boy whispered, in low, broken words:

"They didn't get—nothing. I hallooed—in time."

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"Oh, George, this is the boy you drove away this morning," said a low, frightened voice near by. And poor Dick raised his eyes to see his angel lady.

"Ha! Then it is as I suspected," said Mr. Clifton.

"No, no! I am—not so bad. Oh, please, lady—stop this bleeding—so I can tell you all," whispered Dick.

Quickly they summoned the physician, who lived across the street.

The doctor looked at the wounded boy, felt his pulse, and sadly shook his head. From his side the blood was flowing continually. But managing to staunch it for a while, he administered a cordial which seemed to strengthen the poor boy.

"Never mind, lady. Don't look sorry. I ain't— Please come close. I can't speak loud," Dick whispered.

And then, when all gathered near, stopping often to rest, and to receive a cordial from the doctor, he told his story—a pitiful story; one of gratitude, self-sacrifice, devotion, aye, to death even.

He had agreed to come with the robbers, that he might give the alarm, and save their property. That when the men had gotten into the house, lighted their dark lantern, and was about forcing the safe, where the silver and money were, he had put out the light quickly, and raised the cry that had aroused them; and for which he received the wound of which he was then dying. Tears were streaming from Mrs. Clifton's and others' eyes. Her husband was more agitated than any one had ever seen him before.

"Save him, doctor! save him! Oh, how I wronged you, poor child!" he said, in a voice trembling with emotion.

"Don't worry, sir. You couldn't help it. But please tell folks Dick wasn't so bad as all thought—when I'm gone, you know. I'm so glad if I have served you. Dick has done some good now, and he's glad to go to mother. So happy!

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Sweet lady, don't cry. It was your smile and kind word that saved me. Hold my hand. Is it dirty? No; how white and clean it is now! And see! My clothes are clean and nice! Oh, how dark it is now! Please light the gas? I hear mother calling—I'm coming. I see now. Oh, how beautiful you are, lady! Mother is holding a bright crown over your head. Up, up, please? lift me, please?"

She raised him gently. A bright, beautiful smile was over the poor pale face. His eyes closed; the blue lips quivered. "So glad, mother!" was scarcely breathed out, and his head fell back on the doctor's bosom, and poor Dick—devoted Dick—was freed from suffering, sorrow, and sin!

George Clifton had him laid among his kindred dead, and a little stone told the story of his devotion. The cold, suspicious nature of George Clifton has undergone a great change. Few harsh words, and frequent gentle ones, fall on the ears of the living when he is near them, for now he feels the power of a gentle word. "The good, the joy that it may bring, Eternity shall tell."

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THE LOVER'S GHOST.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was a dismal night. The wind, moaning and sighing, swept through the tall poplars and round the great stone house, stealing in through crack and crevice, and "chilling to the very heart," notwithstanding the glowing fire in the grate, one of the inmates. So she said, as she drew closer around her the shawl, and sank further back in the comfortable arm-chair:

"Well, what is it, my dears? What for do you want your old nurse?"

"A story, nurse! Tell us a ghost story, please?" asked a pretty, bright girl, dropping on a stool at the feet of the venerable nurse.

"A ghost story! Well, something did happen sixty years ago. I will tell you about it. You may be able to explain it. You are wiser now than we were then."

"Tell us! O yes, tell us!" the merry maidens pleaded, drawing closer round the old woman.

"Here, in this house, I lived when it happened, near sixty years ago. I came here with your great-grandmother, my little Nellie. She was a bride then, and I her little maid. This house was filled with as merry a set of young folks as were ever gathered together. And the merriest of them all was Mirian Ashton.

"She was the life of all the wedding parties. At times now I think I can hear her merry, ringing voice sounding

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through these halls. She was beautiful, too; and, although I would not admit it then, was even more beautiful than my own dear lady.

"Lovers she had by the dozen; yet she laughed and made fun of them all, until young Archie Grafton came home from abroad. And when, like all the other young men about here, he grew to love her too, we all saw plainly how it was. She did not laugh at and make fun of him.

"We knew she was caught at last. And he was so different in his nature! She so gay, happy, thoughtless, and childlike; he grave, silent, watchful and dignified. I wondered how they could love each other!

"I remember once hearing her say she never had a sorrow in her life, and knew not what it was to feel sad. My lady said to me afterwards:

"'Trouble would go very hard with Mirian. She could not bear much. God grant she may never have to!'

"Mr. Grafton seemed to worship her. He would watch her every motion, and listen to her merry words spoken to others with a real jealous way. I think he could not bear to have her give a look or speak a word except to him.

"At times she would be very good, and only seem to care to be with him. And then again she would go back to her old ways, and be merry and happy with other young gentlemen. She would flirt a little, as you call it now, and he would chide and coax her afterward; and again she would try to please him, until it happened, one time, we had a dinner party. It was the last one of the season, and so a grand one it was. Many folks came down from the city, and some of Miss Mirian's old beaux.

"I never saw her look so beautiful as she did then. She wore the dress she waited on my lady in—white—all white, and the satin covered with lace that my lady told me was a fortune of itself.

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"I can see her now, as she flitted about in this very room. Those doors were not here then; all was one great drawing-room, they called it. And I almost think I can hear his deep, heavy breathing, as he gazed on her giving her bright, beautiful smiles and sweet words to others. He stood there, just at that corner of the mantel, when I came in to bring my lady's fan. They were dancing, and it was very warm in here, but bleak and cold enough outside.

"It grew late in the night; many of those who lived near had gone; others were seeking the rooms we had prepared for them, and I was waiting, just inside the library, with the wrapping of one of the ladies who was just bidding good-night to the guests still in this room.

"I heard some one coming, and stepped back a little. The door was pushed further open, thus hiding me, and Miss Mirian and Mr. Grafton came in.

"I do not know how it was I did not get out. I seemed bound in that spot. I did not mean to be an eavesdropper.

"They were talking when they entered; he in an angry voice. She said:

"'If you cannot trust me, I fear we would live a very miserable life. I do not wish your love if you have not perfect confidence in me.'

"'Why, then, do you give the smiles that should alone be mine to others? Why—'

"'Stop!' she said in a voice I had never heard from her before—'Stop! Remember, Mr. Grafton, I am not your slave yet, to do your bidding alone. I very much fear I should be, if I were your wife, which I never will be, unless I very much change my mind, and you your actions and nature too.'

"'Mirian, you never loved me. You have been trifling with me, as with the others; and, as heaven hears me, you shall not have a chance to change your mind. I will go

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and leave you to carry on your game of heart-breaking,' he said, in such a bitter voice as I never heard.

"'Go, then! 'tis better so. Good-night, Mr. Grafton,' she answered; and he said:

"'Good-bye, you may add, and for ever. I will trouble you no more, Miss Ashton!'

"She smiled, as much as to say, 'You will be back again to-morrow,' and walked out, leaving him in the library. Another moment, and he followed, and I escaped then, and heard him ordering his horse a moment later.

"He only lived about a mile up the road. You know the 'Old Hall?' That was his home.

"That word, '*forever!*' kept ringing in my ear. Although I knew it was only a lovers' quarrel, and thought he would either be back again in the morning, or she would write him a note in the afternoon, I felt really so sorry for him, going off so unhappy! But I knew he was as much, may be more, in fault than she was. But it was such a bleak night, so icy and slippery, I wished he had stayed with us, as he often did.

"I left Miss Mirian in the drawing-room, and went up stairs to attend some of our guests. A very short time, not more than a half hour, I think, could have passed, when I heard a loud ring at the hall door. A few moments after, a scream from my lady caused me to fly almost to her; but I had only reached the stairs when another cry, a heart-rending wail, seemed sounded through these halls.

"Terrified, I sprang down the stairs just as some men were bearing into this room the form of one that it needed only another glance to tell whom.

"They laid him on a couch, just there, between those great windows. The man whom only a little while before had left us, full of health and strength, was there lying pale and lifeless.

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"Yes, yes, his good-bye was 'for ever.' Archie Grafton was dead. Thrown from his horse, his head striking against a large rock on the side of the road, a great gaping wound on his broad, handsome forehead, told us that. Mr. Ashton caught his sister in his arms, and strove to take her from the dreadful sight; but with another wild cry and a bound, she fled from him, and again sank down beside her dead lover, pillowing his head on her breast.

"Oh, I think I can see her now. The great stains of blood all over her beautiful dress.

"Well, well; it was long before they could get her away; and when they did, they soon knew her mind was wandering. Aye, yes, I think with that first cry that escaped her lips, her reason was gone.

"After weeks of illness she recovered some strength, and moved about again among us; but, oh, the saddest face that ever was seen was hers then. No one would have known her.

"Sighing all the time; weeping so much; never speaking except to answer, and then most always her reply would be the same to every question, 'Gone for ever!'

"Yes, she was 'melancholy mad,' they all said. Now here comes the strange part of my story. She was sitting looking out of the window one day, I watching her. It was twilight. All of a sudden she started up. Her eyes grew bright; a beautiful smile was over her whole face; she looked like herself; and, waving her hands out of the window, she said:

"'I am coming, Archie; wait a moment.' Out of the room she ran, through the hall, and out on the lawn. I followed to the door.

"I saw her put forth her arms, as if to welcome some one; and then, to save me, I could not follow any nearer her, nor

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raise my eyes even. I was possessed with a sort of awe, or terror; I don't know what it was.

"She walked up and down under the trees, so some of the servants said, and declared, too, they saw a gentleman with her. Others said it was her own shadow. Perhaps I might have seen and known if I could have looked; but I did not dare.

"I heard her talking softly, lovingly to herself, or some one else. She came in, saying, 'Good night, love,' and looked gentle, happy. From that night she was no longer sad; but every evening, just at twilight, she would go out and seem to welcome some one; and always I would grow so frightened, or get possessed of that strange feeling, that I dared not raise my eyes.

"One afternoon it was raining, and she sat watching at the window. She turned to me and said:

"'I don't think Mr. Grafton will come this evening; he will not wish me to walk in the rain. But perhaps he will want to come and sit with me in here. Mary Leonard, I do not want him to come in, because, if he does, he will surely coax me away, and I am not just ready yet. Now be bright looking out, and if you see him let me know, and I will run out for a moment. Get my shawl.'

"No one would have dreamed her crazy, if they did not know. Mr. Archie was dead, and could not come. I got the shawl, and in a few moments after she said:

"'Here he comes! Dear Archie! He could not stay away!'

"She ran out, but only staid a little while, and came back, smiling softly, and singing a little love-song she used to sing before her sorrow came. But as her mind grew more cheerful her strength was daily growing less. She failed quite fast; and from being as round, plump and rosy

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as you, my little Nellie, she grew like a shadow, so thin and white.

"We all knew she was not long for this world. The doctor told my lady she was fading away. Before the roses of summer had ceased to bloom she would be with the flowers, blooming in a better land. Often she would say:

"'Mary Leonard, mind, you must not let Archie come in until I tell you.'

"Every evening, in the twilight, she would walk under those great poplars, and murmur in a soft voice to some one even until the evening before she died. Ah! my dears, I can't tell what it was, *his ghost*, or *her imagination!* I only know she was comforted and made happy. And I was awed into such a state that I could not use my eyes to see if there was anything to see.

"The last evening, just before that hour she always went to walk, she called me and said:

"'Mary Leonard, Archie may come in *now*. I cannot walk to meet him, I am so tired. I will go with him; I am ready now.'

"Twilight came. She looked eagerly out. The glad look came again in her eyes, and she attempted to raise herself, and then sunk back into her easy-chair.

"'He is at the door, Mary; let him in,' she said.

"I glanced at her. She was so white and strange looking! I tried to run or call for help. But no; that same old feeling was on me.

"Down went my eyes to the floor, and stayed there. I heard her say:

"'I am waiting and ready, love! Take me, Archie! I am yours!'

"Then her voice sank so low I could only catch the words, 'No more—forever,' and 'parting.' Then a soft lingering sigh, and all grew so still. And with a great

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effort I broke from the spell that held me, and screamed out in my terror; for there, her head drooping on her breast, her hands fallen powerless beside her, was Miss Mirian—dead, dead, dead! I ought not to say *dead*, but sleeping, children, the long, blessed sleep! Freed from her sorrow! She had sought the land where clouds never gather over mind, heart, or eye. She knows all things now. She thought he came for her! I sometimes used to think, may be he did. Ah! dear! I can't tell what it was. But there are wiser folks about now. They can tell, or think they can. I hear them reading of such things, and they seem to understand them. It will not be long before I shall be wiser too, my dears. But that will be when I am with those who have gone before me—up where God gives light to all."

The old nurse ceased. The girls gazed, not affrighted, but with looks of deeper interest, around that room, and thinking of those who had lived, loved and suffered there. They murmured:

"Strange! strange!"

And then Nellie said, softly:

"But it is sweet and comforting to think that we may be permitted to imagine, if nothing more, that some loved one comes to travel with us through that 'valley of shadows. Thank you, nurse, for your story, which, although so strange, is one that has done me good, and has a lesson for us all. We will never part in anger with those we love, for fear it may be 'for ever.'"

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HIRAM HELPER'S FAITH.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Is thy crus[redacted]t failing? rise and share it with another;
And through[redacted]ars of famine, it shall serve thee and thy brother!
Love divine [redacted]ny storehouse, or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fair for one will often make a royal feast for two."

HIRAM HELPER had a secret, the first he had ever kept from his wife during the sixteen years that they had shared each other's joys and sorrows. It pressed heavily on Hiram's heart, which, aching with its burden, longed for relief. In vain he watched his wife's countenance for some sign which told of a favorable time for his speaking, and being at peace.

At length he determined to have an end to the miserable state he was in. He would tell all, and have his heart easy on one subject, if it ached worse about another. Yes, he would deceive Hester no longer, even if he should, as he was almost sure he would, never hear the last of it.

Deeply was Hiram thinking over his secret, and considering the consequence of his divulging it. At the same time his Hester was considering how she should manage to help Hiram a little. She knew he was worrying over the failure of his crop, and likely enough his old folks, father or mother, wanted a little help. And then there was Maggie, just getting to the age that girls want to be fixing up a little. A silk gown, that had been promised for two years, was wanted then, for Kitty Marshall's wedding and the parties after.

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Maggie was to be bride-maid, and of course would want other things too. Now the unsuspecting wife thought that the combination of difficulties was the cause of the anxious look on Hiram's face. Yes, she would try and help him.

"Hiram?" she said.

"Well, Hester."

"That young fellow from town has been here again to-day, looking after butter. He says he would like to engage about twenty-five pounds a week from [redacted] he was so much pleased with the little I sold him whe[redacted]s here last. I wish we could let him have that much[redacted]uld, if we had four cows instead of two."

A real terrified expression came into Hiram's eyes, and he said:

"Oh, don't think of it!"

"But I will. I know, Hiram, how you feel. You have not the means to buy two more cows just now, and you don't feel like using any of that you laid by for Maggie. That's it—hey?"

A groan from Hiram was the only response.

"Ah! I thought so! Now I'll tell you. We will take one hundred dollars, and buy those cows that Dixon has for sale, and in four months I can put it back, and afterwards add much to that, and help you too. What say you?"

"Can't do it, Hester! Indeed I can't!" answered Hiram, in a voice filled with regret.

"Can't! Why not?" asked Hester.

"Because—Hester—because I can't!"

"Because you can't, Hiram Helper? I thought that was only a woman's reason. Now please to tell me *why* you can't?"

"I — I—Well, Hester, I can't—because—well—because the money is gone."

"Money gone!"

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"Gone."

"Where gone?"

"I lent it to Richard Weston," answered poor Hiram, not daring to raise his eyes to his wife's.

"Oh! I know now. *You* was the *kind friend* that set him up again, hey! Oh, Hiram Helper! you have been hearing me wonder who could have been such a fool as to set Dick Weston up again, for two months past, and never once let on it was you. You want a keeper, Hiram Helper. Indeed you do! You, you—yes, you are a lunatic, or worse! Taking bread out of your child's mouth to give to others! Oh! I declare I shall go crazy myself! Set Dick Weston up again!"

"Hester, dear Hester, please don't grieve so. It will be all right; I know it will!"

"Not on this earth!" groaned Hester.

"Yes, here, Hester. He will pay me back in six months, he says."

"And you believe him?" sneered Hester.

"Yes, I do, Hester. And, Hester, I feel sure Maggie will not suffer for it. I am sure God will provide for her. Can't you trust Him?"

"Hiram Helper, don't talk so to me! I can't trust *you* any more. And I don't trust in Dick Weston's ever paying back Maggie's money. Oh! I shall go crazy, or you will send us all to the alms-house, I know!"

"Hester, you will never suffer for anything while I live. And that money I intended for Maggie, because I have lent it to a poor fellow for a little while, I don't see that there is any great harm done! I am certain God will fix it all right."

"I believe that myself. But it will be in the next world."

"And here too, Hester; when it is most needed, perhaps.

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You see, when I saw that young wife of Weston's looking so sorrowful, with her poor little sick baby in her arms, I felt so much for her—so far from all her friends, among strangers too! Then I thought, who knows but some day our Maggie might be just so, in trouble, too, far away from us? And so I thought I would give him a lift. I knew you would not suffer while I had strength, and I did not know how soon that poor young creature might. So now you know just how I came to do it."

"Yes; and I know too, that this town holds the greatest —if it was any other woman's husband, I should say the greatest fool in the world. But as it is, I shall have to say, I suppose, the—"

"Dearest, best, and kindest husband and father, the truest friend, and, more than all, the most faithful, trusting Christian that the world holds," said a young girl who entered the room just then, and throwing her arms around her father's neck, uttered these words in a deep and earnest tone.

"Just alike! A pair of them! Both crazy, I believe," groaned Hester.

"Don't worry, mother, dear. And, father, if Mr. Weston never pays, I shall not feel bad, and will think all will be right, in God's good time," said Maggie.

"You are a good girl, Maggie. Thank you, my daughter, for your sympathy. Come, mother, don't worry. Be friends."

"Yes, do," said Maggie, encircling both parents in one loving caress.

Time wore on, months into years, and Richard Weston was no more successful on Hiram Helper's money than he had been with his own. Things grew worse with him, and at length he left the town to go far away. And Hiram had only the young wife's deep thanks, in return for the money lent.

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"Lost, as I knew it was," said Hester.

"May be not. And if it is, I would sooner it should be so than to see that poor thing so miserable. If she is with her friends and comfortable, I am satisfied," said Hiram, who, after having the weight of the secret removed, and having Maggie's approval also, felt very easy, and expressed himself so, without much fear of the consequences.

Despite Hester's predictions of a final bringing up of the family to the alms-house, Hiram managed to get on very comfortably. After a while the cows were purchased, and a little later the two hundred and fifty dollars put away again for Maggie, and more and more added. The little household continued to prosper, and after a time the kindly action which had caused Hiram so much uneasiness was almost forgotten and quite forgiven by his wife. She had, at length, learned to place perfect confidence in Hiram's doing just what was right.

Five years after the night we first heard Maggie's loving, comforting words, she left her father's home, and went to make happy another's. Yes, Maggie was married, and Hiram gave his darling girl, one thousand dollars to begin housekeeping with.

"There, child, that is yours; and there is a little more that may come some time, perhaps. If not, we will consider it invested in the Bank of Heaven, won't we?"

"Yes, indeed, father. And I shall thank you for it," answered Maggie.

Months passed on, and the mother's ever watchful eye and anxious heart detected in her child's letters a tone of half-hidden sorrow. Maggie's happiness was short-lived, but her father was spared the pain that knowledge would have caused him.

Mercifully and lovingly God took the good man to himself. Quietly, quickly, spared from lingering sickness and

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suffering he passed away. After the evening prayer his low Amen was heard for the last time on earth.

"Hiram! why, are you asleep?" asked his wife.

Then she noticed he still remained kneeling. In vain she tried to awaken him. Hester knew, then, he was sleeping the last blessed sleep of such as loved both God and his fellow-man.

After a little while the widowed mother sought her child, and then found the cause of Maggie's sorrow.

The man to whom she had intrusted her child was very fond of the wine cup. Carefully he had concealed this vice from the parents, and until months after the marriage Maggie knew not how fatal was becoming that insatiate thirst.

Remaining with, to comfort and sustain her child, the mother saw one after another possession sacrificed by the reckless man until all of his own was gone. Still Maggie clung to him, until all of her father's savings were gone too. And in five more years, Hester and her child were penniless.

This poverty was doubly severe then, for little children looked eagerly into the mother's face, and called for bread.

"Give us this day our daily bread," prayed the infant Hiram, in his sweet, lisping tones. And in an agony of sorrow and doubt the mother groaned forth:

"But the morrow! Oh! the morrow!"

And the blessed little comforter, looking up into her troubled face, hesitated a moment, and then, with a glad look, said:

"I'll ask again to-morrow, mamma. And God will give me plenty, mamma, plenty—all we want."

Confidently the child trusted God. Must not she? thought the miserable mother.

Hester could sustain or comfort her daughter no more. She despaired of any relief, and her old fear of the alms house seemed very near a realization.

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"Oh! child, if we only had that money your father just as good as threw away, how it would help you now! It is a wonder his soft heart was not the ruin of him."

"Dear mother, don't think of that. How glad I am father did that kind action! *That* is the only part of his money I consider *well spent.* If he had not have *saved* that, it would have gone with all the rest!" answered Maggie.

Well might the poor mother say, "Oh! the morrow;" for then the last, the worst of their sorrow would be on them."

Their home, Hiram's home, to which the loving Hester had carried her child and grandchildren, was to be sold by the creditors. Yes, on the morrow they would be homeless.

But before the coming of the morrow, the sorrow-laden woman had another trial to bear. Reeling, staggering up the walk, came the author of all her misery, and sank on the threshold, dying almost—not then in intoxication, but weak and ill from exposure and continual intemperance.

Gently she drew him in, and with patient hand and forgiving heart, again ministered to him. The next day was the darkest of Maggie's life.

The hour for the sale was nearing swiftly. The red flag was placed on the little porch, and the infant Hiram, amused by the bright color playing in the wind, clapped his tiny hands and wondered why his mother was so sad.

"Come see, mamma!" he would call; and then again meeting her sorrowful look, he would say, "Plenty bread, mamma! Plenty bread, to-day, too!"

A louder, merrier shout from her boy caused Maggie to approach a window and look out, as a buggy drew up to the door, in which were two gentlemen, one of whom, jumping out, walked up, and removing the flag, rolled it up, tossed it to the other, who drove off, leaving his companion, who returned to the door and knocked.

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When Maggie admitted her visitor, she immediately recognized the village postmaster, an old friend of her father's.

"My dear child, let me relieve your mind right off. Your home will not be sold to-day—nor ever, I trust."

"Not sold?" repeated Maggie, who gazed bewildered into her friend's face, and could not understand what joy was coming to her.

"No, my child! It is still yours." And then he told her that, a few weeks before, he had received a letter from Dick Weston's widow, inquiring about Hiram Helper and his family, and that he had written immediately and informed her of Hiram's death, and his widow and child's great need, and had stated in a second letter the fact of their home being about to be sacrificed. Only that morning he had received a reply, inclosing a check for the money loaned by Hiram to Dick Weston so many years before, with an increase sufficient to enable him to assure the most pressing creditor that his claim would be satisfied that day. So it was that he had sent off the auctioneer, with the sign of the sale.

"God is good," murmured the thankful woman.

Opening a door of the adjoining room, she called:

"Mother!"

Hester came forth, with a look of deep dejection on her face, but noticing directly the hopeful light in Maggie's eye, she asked eagerly:

"What is it, child? You have good news!"

"Yes, oh, yes, mother!" And then Maggie read to her a letter which the good postmaster had brought her, from Mrs. Weston. It was directed to "The Widow and Daughter of Hiram Helper."

The writer expressed her sympathy for their sorrow, and alluded to her own at the time that Hiram's kind heart felt for her, and in her great need his hand alone, of the many

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they called friends, was stretched forth to help them. "God bless his loved ones!" she wrote. "I know *he* is reaping now his reward."

"My dear, good father!" He said, "God will fix it all right." And has he not done so, mother?" asked Maggie.

"Dear Hiram! Yes, yes, he was always right, although I sometimes feared his soft heart would be the ruin of us."

"No, no, mother! That kind heart's actions have saved and blessed us!" returned Maggie, in a tone filled with deep thankfulness.

"Just then, little Hiram ran in, and seeing the happy change on his mother's face, clapped his tiny hands, and said:

"God did give us plenty of bread to-day, mamma. Hiram said He would; all we want, too!"

The mother pressed closely to her bosom the little namesake of her father, and prayed that the loving nature and trusting faith of that good man might grow and wax strong in her boy's heart, and that in all things he might be like him.

Again Maggie grew hopeful, and in time happy once more. Friends came forward, that the kind postmaster had managed to awaken to their Christian duty; and when God raised Maggie's husband from his bed of illness, his fellowmen helped him to rise again to a position of respect, and the confidence of all who knew him.

Hester lived long to enjoy the return of comfort and happiness to those the loved; and often she is heard to say:

"Hiram was always right, and most particularly when he helped Dick Weston. He said he would consider it invested in the 'Bank of Heaven.' And now I know it must have been; and God gave it to us, in His own good time—our hour of greatest need!"

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RICHER THAN HE THOUGHT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Money makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
All the rest is but leather and prunella.
—NEW READING.

"I SAY, Edith, about this young Gladman!"

"Well, father dear, what about him?" said Edith Bellemore, while a tell-tale blush mantled her fair brow.

"What of him? Why, his visits here are quite too frequent."

"Not more so than many others, father. There is his friend Mr. Wheat, for instance."

"Quite a different person. The case is just this: I have noticed that young Gladman is very attentive, and I fear you receive him rather more favorably than any other. Now you must put a stop to this. Discourage him. I mean, give him to understand his suit—ahem—well—in a word, you won't have him."

"Why, father, how can I do that, when he has never asked me?"

"Nonsense! You girls know well enough how to give a fellow the cold shoulder, so as he *never shall* ask you. You know what I mean. Young Gladman is a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow. Never will be worth a dollar ahead. Not for a moment to be thought of as a proper suitor for you. Society expects and demands a brilliant match for my

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daughter. This young man will do well enough in his place among people of little or no means. I must do him justice, and say he is a man of very fair moral character, that is all."

"Of fair moral character! A possession which should be held of far higher worth than gold, and is valued as such by all true women."

"Sentimental nonsense! You understand me, Edith. You have always been a dutiful, obedient child, and I trust will remain so. I do not wish to treat the young man rudely, nor would have you; only let him understand his case is hopeless. And I say, Edith, there is his friend Mr. Wheat, a fine, noble fellow; you ought to show him some little attention. His position—his wealth demand as much."

"Very well, sir," answered Edith, and as the door closed after her father, added, "for his worth in my eye consists of his kindness to and appreciation of his friend. Oh dear! why was I cursed with wealth? I wish I was poor, that I might be made rich in the possession of Edgar Gladman's heart. Yes, I know he loves me, and it is because of these hated hoards of gold that he does not speak."

As the only child of parents immensely wealthy, Edith's prospects were brilliant. Added to this, she was the sole heiress of an old bachelor uncle, who, dying a few years previous, left her in the immediate possession of a hundred thousand dollars. For many months Edith had felt what a deep impression Edgar Gladman was making on her heart. Yet she knew there was an insurmountable barrier between them—her father's unbending will. He would never consent to her union with other than one of equal wealth or exalted position, and poor Gladman had neither.

"What on earth is the matter, Gladman? Why, man, your looks sadly belie your name. You are the *sorriest*, most miserable looking fellow I've seen for a long while! What's the trouble? Lost the —— case?"

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"No, thank Heaven! that went all right. The poor fellow is acquitted. I ought to feel cheerful for this success."

"Yes, if it only was a *paying* case. Somehow or other you manage to get hold of all the most desperate cases, and those that pay nothing. You ought to have been rich by this time, having been so successful."

"Some one must take such cases. And I am only a follower of yours; we divide, if I mistake not."

"Oh, the thunder! I forgot that. But I can afford it, Ned; you cannot. However, to return to my question: What troubles you?"

"Nothing more than usual. You know how deeply, how hopelessly, I love Miss Bellemore!"

"Well, have you told her, and has she refused you?"

"No, no, I shall never tell her; although I sometimes fancy her a little kinder to me than others. But her father's manner tells me too plainly how absurd it is for me to think of her. What have I to offer to such as Edith Bellemore? Honor forbids me to speak!"

"Oh, fly away with your honor! You can offer her more than gold—a true, pure heart! an honorable name! And now, Ned, take courage. I know she loves you. And I might as well make a clean breast of it. I have thought a great deal of her myself, and if I had not seen very clearly she had no love for me, why, I should have placed my hand and heart before her long ago. She is a lovely girl, and you have my best wishes for your success. I was just coming to your room to ask a favor."

"From me? It is granted before asked."

"Thank you; then I will go directly and order your baggage removed to my rooms. For you are to be with me in the future."

"Stop, my friend! this cannot be. I cannot afford such a style of living. Impossible!"

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"You cannot retract; your word is given! It shall cost you no more. You can direct the establishment, and live as economical as you choose. I am awful lonesome since my cousin finished his studies and left for his home; and if you do not have mercy on, and come take care of me, I shall do something desperate."

"Well, be it as you wish."

A few weeks after the above conversation, Sam Wheat was sitting in his luxurious apartment, waiting the return of his friend. At last he came in hurriedly, and going up, placed his arm around young Wheat, saying:

"I am very late, my dear fellow; and now I come with news which I fear will distress you. I am going to leave you, and have only time now to say good-bye."

"Leave me! Where are you going?"

"You know there has been a call for more troops. The —— regiment leaves for the front to-night, and I go with them as a private. If I live long enough, I shall rise—"

"Are you crazy? Oh, my dear fellow, there is no need of your going. Indeed, I cannot spare you! Stay here; I will put in *two* substitutes before they leave to-night."

"No, no, my friend; I must go. I am not crazy now, but may be if I remain longer. I can be better spared than most men. There are none to mourn if I fall. Sam, my good fellow, give an ear to my clients. And one thing more —you will see *her*. Bid her good-bye for me, and just say I could not come to say it. That will be the simple truth. I dare not trust myself. And should I fall—then tell her with my last breath came thoughts of her."

"I shall tell her too, that it was more for love of Edith Bellemore than love of country that made you go and fix yourself as a target for the enemy's shots."

Frequently Sam. Wheat visited Mr. Bellemore's, and managed each time to get from Edith some little message,

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some word which whispered hope to the soldier's lonely heart.

Accounts of young Gladman's bravery and swiftly rising career often reached his friend; and before six months had passed, he had reached the command of his company.

Regularly were these good tidings conveyed to Edith's ear by the devoted friend. One day, on his return from one of these visits, he found seated in his office, waiting him, one of the assessors of the internal revenue.

Mr. Wheat's returns were soon made, his income tax fixed, and the assessor about leaving, when he stopped, thought a moment, and then asked, "Have you not a friend here with you, a young lawyer?"

Sam was about to tell him where his friend was then, and what doing, and add, that men who were periling their lives for their country were not taxed. But a bright thought entered his brain. He dearly loved a good joke, and now there was a capital chance for real fun. He could not resist, and in fact he was quite willing to pay a good round sum for the pleasure of a hearty laugh. So he answered:

"Yes, certainly, my friend Gladman. But he is not in the city just now."

"Can you tell where I could hear from him?"

"Couldn't possibly say where he is now. He is traveling for pleasure. But I *can* tell you all about his worth. No one knows that better than I."

"Well, if you will, thank you. His income is quite small, I believe."

"Ha! ha! ha! So, many others believe. Gladman is worth more than any man I know. Just take a seat, while I look over some papers. I am his representative, agent, or anything you may call me. He is an odd fellow—keeps his affairs very much to himself."

Sam took out his pencil, looked over sundry papers, made

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numberless figures, and then, calling to the assessor, pointed to the amounts.

"No! Impossible! Why, I had no idea of this. Why, he is almost a millionaire!"

"That is so—if those figures tell the truth," answered Sam.

"No doubt about the figures! You will swear to this?"

"Oh! thunder! I am a member of the church, and opposed to all swearing. Why, man, I told you I could not swear to my own. I can do as I did then—swear it is no *more* than that."

"That will be sufficient," answered the assessor.

"And now, if you can give me the receipts, I would like to pay both taxes, for I am going to leave the city myself for a while, and should like to settle this business," continued Sam.

The officer's surprise was immense. But there could be no doubt of the truth, he thought, and remarked, when leaving:

"When this report is published, it will surprise many, I imagine."

"Well, I guess it will. It is rather hard, too, that a fellow cannot be allowed to keep his own secrets," returned Sam. And then, when the door closed, Sam could hold in not a second longer, but burst forth into such a peal of merriment. He chuckled and rubbed his hands, then roared in laughter, and held his sides; and finally fell exhausted on the carpet, just as his old servant entered the room.

This man had been with young Wheat for many years, and really loved his young master. He gazed on the form lying before him. His face grew very sad. He shook his gray head ominously, and then went up, lifted Sam very gently, and placed him on the lounge, went and dipped a towel in ice water, and placed it on his head—all the time

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his face growing sadder. Sam read his servant's thoughts, knew his misgivings, and was about to reassure him as to his condition. When he opened his mouth to speak, with the first word came forth a distinct, unmistakable hic-cough!

"Proof positive, against all words to the contrary!" said Sam to himself. And then his mirth burst forth again.

The old servant returned to the kitchen and reported to Betty that "for the first time, since he had known Mr. Wheat, he had found him very much under the influence of liquor, and in a very bad way."

He soon returned with Betty, wheeled the lounge into the adjoining bedroom, drew off his master's boots, undressed and placed him in bed. A little while after, he came in with a hot mustard bath—put Sam's feet in, regardless of all resistance, and finally absolutely forced him to swallow a pint of scalding hot coffee, without cream or sugar. The old man nodded to Betty, and whispered, confidently, "That will bring him round all right."

Morning dawned. Sam's merriment was reduced to contolment, and the faithful servant's mind made easy.

The next thought with Sam was, how to get Gladman home. In less than a month the report would be published, and then—

"Oh, Sam, my boy, you shall have rare fun! How old Bellemore will wheel round and change his tactics! Oh, there is a jolly time coming," he said.

But Sam's merriment received a sudden check. News reached him of another terrible battle, in which Gladman's regiment suffered severely.

The next day there came a list of the killed and wounded. Among the latter was the name of Capt. Gladman as very dangerously wounded. A few hours later, and Sam was *en route* for Washington, to find, and, if possible, to bring home his friend.

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Mr. Bellemore sat leisurely sipping his coffee and reading the morning news. Suddenly the paper was dashed aside, his hand brought down upon the table with a force which made all the elegant china shake and tremble, accompanied by the words:

"Dolt! Fool! Idiot! Just as blind as a bat!"

"To whom are you applying those flattering epithets, father?" asked Edith.

"To myself! Any child of seven years might have had more sense! A man of such elegant address, such rare refinement! I might have known that only the possessor of a large fortune could have his attainments. His whole bearing is princely! His were the eccentricities of wealth. His always taking the poor, non-paying clients might have opened my eyes. He wanted to be appreciated for *himself* alone. I understand now. I am sorry to have to admit that he was treated very shabbily by some of my family. I always thought he was a man far above most of the men who visited here."

"Who are you speaking of, Mr. Bellemore?" asked his wife.

"Why, young Gladman!"

"Father, did you not tell me I must—"

"*No*, Miss. Yes, Miss. I mean, I *did* tell you, you must not treat him rudely. You *know* I did!"

"Is he not the young person that you said would be very good food for powder?" asked his wife.

"No, Madam! I am speaking of Captain Gladman, a man of great patriotism and immense wealth! *You* refer to a very different person, I presume! Look there! And seizing up the paper, he pointed to the Revenue report.

"Almost a millionaire! A noble fellow! Such bravery too. I shall call on him just as soon as he gets home, to express my appreciation of his services in behalf of his country."

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"He returned yesterday, father. So Mr. Wheat told me last night," said Edith.

"Indeed! Then I shall order the carriage and call this morning. And I think, Edith, if you have any patriotism you will accompany me. We should show him that his countrymen and women too appreciate him! I shall be ready in an hour."

Edith was glad enough to have the permission to go. And while her father was directing the removal from the carriage of some rare old wines, she found opportunity to bend over the wounded man and whisper earnestly:

"Thank God for giving you back to us again. We will soon have you well and strong."

Mr. Bellemore's kindness was really oppressive. Sam Wheat's eyes danced merrily. Every now and then he would be seized with a violent fit of coughing—a ruse to hide his explosion of mirth.

"What is the matter, Sam; what are you laughing about?" asked his friend after the guests were gone."

"Oh, Ned, my boy, it is such fun to see old Bellemore doing the patriotic! Ha! ha! ha!"

"I fear I've done him injustice. I thought he had no thought except for gold and gain! Indeed, it is worth while getting wounded to find out the value of your friends," said Gladman.

"Oh, yes; certainly!" and Sam's mirth exploded again. "You see, my dear boy, how these kind mammas appreciate your services too. Look at all these beautiful flowers, dainty jellies, rare wines, sweet rose-tinted, kind, appreciative little notes! I believe I'll go get a slight wound myself. You see, these dear women can't fight *themselves*. so they make much of the boys that can fight for them! *May be* that is so; and *may be* they think they have just found out your *real* worth!"

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"Well, I had no idea that my poor services would be thought so much of. It does a soldier good to see so much patriotic feeling in his native city," said the unconscious young man.

Sam broke out again. This time his laughter was quite alarming, and Gladman murmured something about being "possessed of a laughing devil," he feared.

Kind treatment, hope continually whispering promises of love, soon wrought wonders for Edgar Gladman's restoration to health and strength.

Mr. Bellemore smoothing the path and inviting him on, and Sam Wheat constantly urging him forward, there was no resisting. And before he well knew how it all happened, he was engaged to Edith Bellmore; and before his three months' leave of absence had expired, Edith was all his own.

On the return of the happy couple from their wedding tour, Mr. Bellemore ventured to suggest the propriety of Capt. Gladman resigning his command. During the conversation the truth all came out. His supposed immense wealth! The scales dropped from his eyes. The *why* he was so *kindly* treated; Sam Wheat's constant merriment—all, all was plain enough now! Mr. Bellemore was far too shrewd a man to acknowledge to his son-in-law, or the world, that he was caught in his own trap. Yet he was caught decidedly, he felt too well, so determined to make "the virtue of necessity," and bear his disappointment as gracefully as possible. Gladman hastened to Sam to demand an explanation, in the midst of which they were interrupted by a light knock and Edith's voice, asking:

"May I come in? Mr. Wheat, I have a double object in this visit: first to find that truant, and then to thank you from my inmost heart for your aid in securing me the great happiness I am now blest with. From what I sur-

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mise, without your assistance I should not be near so rich to-day."

"Rich! Oh, Edith, to think I won you under false pretences! Sam, was this wise?"

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Wheat, *very* wise. Others thought they had just found out his true value—you and I *knew* it long ago. Oh, of far more worth than *gold* is the love of a true, honest heart," said Edith, earnestly.

"Sam, *how* came you to do it?"

"Why, that persistent assessor seemed so very anxious, I thought that likely enough Uncle Sam needed all the help he could get; so—well, I thought that the best way to make that respected relative a present in a delicate manner, and not wound his very sensitive nature, was *just the way I did*," said Sam, with a droll expression on his fine face.

"Oh, Sam, you are a sly scamp!"

"Oh, Sam, you are a true friend, a dear, good man, and I just wish I had a sister to give you," said Edith.

"Sam, I think Edith and I have both come to the same conclusion, and that is just this: there never was as good *wheat* raised as *our Wheat*, so entirely free from all *chaff!*"

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THE NEW MOTHER.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Ah! they loved her soon. The little one
Crept into her arms as to a nest.
Willie's always with her now, and May
Growing nearer to her every day."

THERE was unusual stir among the servants of "Lindley Grange." The windows of the great house were all open, and through them could be seen busy hands festooning garlands on the walls and over the paintings, while rare exotics were arranged in the antique vases.

Many months had passed since "The Grange" had been decorated with flowers. The last time it was with flowers all pale, none of brilliant hue, for she that had been once the brighest flower blooming there, lay faded, cold and dead. Twelve months had passed, and the tiny forms had ever since been decked with some badge telling of their loss. The motherless ones were that day to cast aside their garb of sorrow. Yes, a new mother was coming, and no reminder of the past must cloud her joy.

Nurse Cummings was gazing with a frowning brow on the great preparations going on. Closer to her fond heart she clasped the babe, and drew little Willie from the drawing-room door, into which he was peeping with wondering eyes, back into a cozy, beautiful room beyond—into "mamma's own room." And there the devoted woman stood with her nursling before the pictured face of her whose vacant place was that day to be filled by another. That sacred

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room was already occupied by another one, a child whose heart needed no tutoring. May had thrown herself on the sofa, her sweet face hidden amid the cushions, as if she wanted to shut out from eye and ear the sight and sounds of merry-making. She was old enough to feel all that Nurse Cummings would fain have taught the younger ones. Springing up, she stood with them before their mother's portrait, and with her little hands folded over her almost bursting heart, she sobbed forth:

"Though your place in papa's heart and home be given to another, dear mamma, your children will never *never*, let any other make them feel your loss the less, and never fill your place in their hearts."

"My own darling! Thank Heaven you are so like your dear mamma. He cannot forget her while you are by. But come, dry your tears, my precious. I would have you look as pretty as can be, and that will remind him, even at his new wife's side, of her whose beauty none could surpass. If this one is good and gentle, she will remind him of one that was better, aye, than the best that can live. And if she is proud, and has a will of her own, O then he will ever be thinking of the one that only knew the pride of being his! We will not sorrow, my May! Mamma cannot be forgotten, even by him."

"Nurse, nurse, where are your children? Come! tie on their ribbons; you have no time to lose. Their papa and—" The word was unsaid. Even the merry tongue of the housemaid could not give *that* name to another, a stranger. "The company will be here in fifteen minutes."

But that was time sufficient to smooth Willie's raven hair, catch back the goldens curls that fell over May's broad, white brow, wipe the traces of tears from the blue eyes, and tie on the bright ribbons.

The children were ready. In another moment the roll of the chaise was heard approaching the house.

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The servants gathered round, all anxious to catch a glimpse of the new mistress—to welcome her, the master thought—to decide if she was worthy to fill the place of one to whose memory they were all devoted.

All stood smiling but Nurse Cummings: she remained in the drawing-room with her little ones.

May sprang forward to throw her arms around her father, who, hastily kissing her, still clasping her with one arm, drew her forward and said:

"Welcome your mother, my daughter."

The arms that had been raised to clasp him were powerless then. Pale and trembling she stood, and if any sound had escaped her lips, it would have been the cry:

"No, no: not *my* mother!"

"Dear May," whispered a voice clear and sweet, and the child was pressed to the bosom of the new mother before the frown that was gathering had settled on the father's brow.

"Papa! papa!" cried out Willie, and the handsome five years old boy was caught to the father's heart. Then turning with him, he said:

"Kiss mamma, Willie."

But ere the words had left his lips, Willie lisped:

"I can't kiss mamma. She is dead. I've got no mamma now."

An angry flush mantled George Lindley's brow, and he looked sternly towards the nurse. But a gentle touch was on his arm, and a gentler tone whispering:

"Give them time. I will win their love."

And turning again to May, she said:

You are like your mamma, May. I knew her well, and loved her very dearly. We will talk of her by and by. You can tell of your remembrance, and I of her childhood days."

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Then May looked up for the first time to see, not the new mother, or her father's wife, but the friend of her mother's early youth.

The right chord had been touched. But oh! it was long in yielding. For the jealous nurse watched and baffled every effort to win the children's hearts.

Still patiently striving, the gentle step-mother watched and toiled, sometimes growing almost hopeless of ever winning the little wayward hearts.

With a bitter spirit, Nurse Cummings saw the happiness of the master. Never, in the old time, did she ever see him as then. Never had she heard his laugh ringing through those halls. He would smile gently, sweetly, on his child-like wife; and nurse could not censure aught he did. He was ever kind, attentive and considerate; but withal a shade of sadness dwelt within. And with the new wife he was so very different!—a happy, joyous man. A new life seemed opened to him. And it was that that made Nurse Cummings strive so anxiously against the power that had changed the master so.

In the depths of the nurse's heart she felt how powerful were the weapons she fought against: patient, untiring love; a true, noble heart. Often May would say:

"How very beautiful she is!"

Yes; Margaret was beautiful—queenly beautiful. And proudly George Lindley presented her to his guests, many of whom marvelled that a man could love two women so entirely dissimilar: the first a fairy child, frail and timid; the other all dignity and grace.

"Will they *never* love me? Oh! how shall I win my children's hearts?" murmured Margaret.

She knew not that the longing thought in her heart had escaped her lips, and that her husband's ear had caught it.

"My noble, patient wife! It is not your children's hearts

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that are hard to win; it is their counsellor's misused power. Cummings' devotion to their mother makes her very jealous of another's winning even a portion of their love. Oh! if they, if *she* only knew all!"

"We cannot censure her loyalty, even though we deplore its effects. How spirited Willie is! and how like you! I yearn so constantly to pillow his head on my bosom to sleep, but he will not let me. I think I love him best. How he would comfort me in your absence! But I will not think of that—"

"But I must, love. Many things I must look to, for your happiness and our children's. You will keep up a brave heart. A trip across the ocean is not much nowadays, and I shall soon be back."

Days sped rapidly on. On the next one George Lindley was to sail for a business trip to Europe.

The children were gathered in "mamma's room." Willie was kneeling at nurse's side, repeating his infant prayer.

The father entered, waited until Willie had finished, and then he drew him within his arms, and caused May to sit beside him, and said:

"My darlings, you know to-morrow I shall go from you. I have much to say, and—nay, Cummings, I wish you to hear me too. Sit down. I will tell you a little story, which you may understand too, Willie.

"Many years ago a little girl was left without the love and protection of either parent. None of kindred were near the orphan child. But kind friends sought and drew her away from the home of sorrowful remembrance, to one where she was surrounded by love and sympathy.

"There she found a companion so gentle, so ever watchful for her happiness, that soon the little saddened heart grew light and joyous again. Years passed on, and the friends grew to be maidens, both very beautiful.

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"One with sunny hair, and eyes as blue as yours, my May. A fair, frail being, that must be cherished with the tenderest care.

"The other was older, graver, with raven hair and eyes, dark and full of beauty. It was difficult to decide which of the two was most to be admired.

"It was when the fairy-like maiden was of sixteen years that I knew her first. A perfect child of nature, full of love, confiding, and with winning little ways, she was. I was fond of the beautiful child, humored her sweet will, and watched her carefully, tenderly, as if she had been my little sister.

"But for the other maiden my heart glowed with all the strongest, purest devotion a man can feel—such as he can give *but to one.* That he gave to Margaret. But she gently put it by; for she had discovered that the hope which filled her heart, lived in that of her foster-sister.

"So she stole away from her home, giving not even a parting word, for fear her strength should fail in that trial. Such a sacrifice she made! giving all the joy and taking all the sorrow away in her solitude, that she might save her friend—that the tender heart that had been so saddened in its childhood days, might not, in its early womanhood, be stricken again.

"Then it happened that the gift that Margaret laid aside was given to your mother. Then she became my wife.

"Now, my little May, you know who this dear friend was —Margaret, who loved your mother so.

"Do not my children owe her love?

"So closely did she guard her sacrifice, that your mother never dreamed that her joy was gained through her friend's sorrow. But now she is in a land where joy is complete. And should you mar the happiness of one who has known enough of pain?

"It is a debt of gratitude you owe my wife. And, Cum-

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mings, you too, can add your share. You loved your lady truly. I cannot ask for such. But do not tutor the children's hearts, except to love and duty."

Margaret sat alone in her own room. A deeper shadow had crept over heart than she had known for many months.

On the morrow her husband was to leave home. She had failed in all her attempts to win his children's love: not one of those little hearts would return her the smallest portion of all the love she gave to them. Her heart was aching bitterly.

A low knock at the door aroused her, and in answer to her "Come in!" Nurse Cummings entered, for the first time since that room had been occupied by its present mistress.

By the hand she held Willie, and drawing him forward, she said:

"Willie has come to fetch you into 'mamma's room.' His father is there, and May wants you too."

It was only a few words, but Margaret knew the long-fought battle was over. Love had crowned her with the sweetest victory ever woman felt.

Cummings never did anything by halves. She opened the door to usher Margaret in, and ere May had embraced and welcomed her coming, the mother's chair was drawn out, and Cummings said:

"The babe will sleep now, if 'mamma' will sing to him."

"Yes, sing, love: his angel mother's cradle song," said the happy father. And as the sweet, low voice, filled with tones of love and thanksgiving, sang that lullaby, methinks that the mother's spirit, as a guardian angel near, heard the song, and entreated Heaven's choicest blessings on her who fills the place of mother so nobly, lovingly, justly, to the motherless ones.

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AN AWFUL WARNING.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"To each his suffering—all are men
Condemned alike to groan;
The prosperous for another's pain,
The wretched for their own."

"Oh, dear! was there *ever* a woman with so many troubles at one time as I have? Indeed, I am almost crazy. And I see no way of relief." This soliloquy was cut short, by Norah, Mrs. Osborn's maid, opening the door and announcing:

"Mrs. Hartly, if you plaze, marm."

"I see you are worried," said the visitor, coming forward and taking her friend's hand. "What is it? Perhaps I can help you. I have had so much of darkness in my own life, that I feel much sympathy for my friends' suffering, either from annoyances or real troubles. Which are yours?"

"Both, I am sure. Sit down, and let me tell you. First my cook has gone off, giving me not an hour's warning. I might manage to cook a little, with Norah's help, until I could get some one, but she has left all the week's washing lying wet in the tubs. Added to this, she in her carelessness threw her shawl over her shoulders, and swept from the breakfast table a very elegant glass pitcher that Mr. Osborn's mother gave him. About this I am dreadfully worried. I don't know what Mr. Osborn will say. We very rarely use this pitcher, except when we have company. I

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have always been so careful of it? Dear! dear! what *shall* I do?"

A smile was playing around the corners of the listener's mouth, as her friend told of her *troubles*, as she called them. But she answered the appealing look and words:

"These are annoyances, truly, but nothing more, dear friend, and I think we can manage these very easily—"

"Well, hear me through; the others you will surely call real troubles. You know young Charles Kent has been visiting our Susie for some months past, and they think they love each other devotedly. She vows she will die if her father sends him off. And he declares he will have her, with or without our consent. Yesterday Mr. Osborn told Susie if he found young Kent here again he would order him out of the house. So, poor child, she is terribly distressed, and I think this morning I can see very plainly she has a different look, one which tells of determined opposition. Her father is very much pleased with George Fairwell, his partner's son, and thinks if Kent were out of the way he would seek Susie's love."

Mrs. Hartly's face had been growing sad during the last few moments, and she asked:

"What has your husband against young Kent?"

"His fickleness in business, his want of energy, and great extravagance, deriving the means to indulge in the latter from his mother's purse. Oh, I fear Susie may be induced to run off with him. Then our son Walter is giving us a great deal of trouble. He is out almost every night, and has money, more than we can account for. Last night, when he came home I smelt the fumes of liquor very plainly. His father is terribly angry with him. He has hardly spoken a kind word to him for a month past. Last night he told him if he was not in by eight to-night, he should not come in at all. I try to hide his faults the most I can,

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but the last keeps me in misery all the time. I've scolded and threatened, coaxed and beseeched, all to no effect. What will become of my boy I fear to think!"

And here the sorely tried mother could no longer restrain her tears. Her friend was deeply moved, and said:

"The anxiety for your children's welfare I can fully sympathize with, and you have serious cause to tremble for both your son and daughter. Yes, you have with these real trials both of your patience and for your judgment, and, oh! you must deal *wisely* now if you would avoid *real troubles*. I don't think God willingly or unnecessarily afflicts His children. I think He often permits us to work out our own future, either for good or ill. I can see how you can find relief from all that worries you. But that you may more fully realize on what dangerous grounds you stand, and how carefully you must deal with your children, I will tell you my own sad experience. I pray God you may never gain wisdom at so terrible a cost as I have. I was married at a very early age, and when scarcely more than a child myself I became a mother. I had no conception of the responsibility devolving upon me. My husband's time was all devoted to business; mine, in a round of fashionable gayeties. We neither had scarce an hour to devote to our children. They were given everything that *wealth* could purchase, yet denied that which even the poorest laborer's children are blest with—their parents' society, teaching, and influence. Hired servants ministered to our little ones, and influenced and moulded their young minds. We loved our boy and girl in our way, and were proud of their beauty and intelligence; and their infant sports tended occasionally to amuse a few leisure moments. Things went on in this way for years, until our eyes were opened to the fact that our children were no longer around us—a youth and maiden were in their place.

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"We soon became aware of an acquaintance existing between Alice and a young man in every way unworthy of her. I tried to put an end to the intimacy between them. I became too sure that they were, or fancied themselves, very much in love. My remonstrances and pleadings were of no avail. How could I expect they would be? A mother's teachings were a new thing, and not understood by my child. Oh, then I felt keenly my neglect of duty! I appealed to my husband for help in this difficulty. He was mortified and indignant. Harsh measures were the result. The young man was driven from the house, and Alice sent off to school in a distant city. A few weeks more, and my worst fears were realized; my child had eloped with her lover. This was a terrible blow to her father; indeed he never entirely rallied from the effects. I had received a severe lesson, from which I endeavored to profit. I began to devote my time, heart, and mind to my son. In him, too, I found the fruits of our neglect. Wilful and defiant, I had but little influence with him. Yet I dared not again appeal to my husband. I hid all my boy's faults, yes, and indulged his extravagances, fearing, if I did not, he would go in debt or obtain the money dishonestly. Night after night would find me watching to let him in without his father's knowledge. Day after day he would make larger demands on my purse. But what could I do? I feared equally for husband and son. Mr. Hartly had been for years suffering from heart disease. Alice's marriage having very much increased this affection, I dared not open his eyes to another sorrow. Should it not prove fatal to him, his action in regard to his son's conduct might drive the boy to some speedy evil. Two years after Alice left us, my husband died. I was left alone to battle with a continual and daily increasing trial. I had not the will, strength, or ability to overcome the boy's determined spirit

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and reckless manner of living. I was completely his slave, yielding to all his wishes. A few months before he was twenty-one he came and asked me for two hundred dollars, saying he was going with a friend to a celebrated watering place to spend a few days. I objected. I had only that day paid bills for him to the amount of five hundred dollars, and was very much worried. He coaxed pleasantly at first, then rather insisted that, as he was so nearly of age, he ought to be permitted to use some of what would soon be his own. Still I yielded not. He grew very angry, demanded, and threatened, if I did not, he would do something desperate. Oh, my friend, I have often since marvelled how I lived on after that dreadful scene! My poor boy! so young! his life blasted! his terrible end the result of his mother's neglect of a mother's duty. But I must finish, that you may have an idea of what *real* troubles are. Seeing that I still remained firm, George rushed up to his room, and in a few minutes returned, and asked, 'Mother, will you give me the money?'

"'I cannot, my child,' I answered. I have often wondered how it was I resisted. I must have been impelled for some purpose, good or ill.

"Again he asked, and drawing from his bosom a pistol, added:

"'Mother, if you do not give me the money, I will blow my brains out before your eyes!'

"I looked well at him. I thought I could well see he was only trying to frighten me. Something whispered, 'Remain firm. Gain this victory, and all will be right.'

"I answered, 'No, George. My son, I might as well let you know now that this extravagance must be stopped.'

"'Very well, mother. I will ask once more, and if you do not yield then, good-by.'

"'Never!' I said. Oh, God willed not that grief or

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remorse should kill, or I could not have thus lived on, waiting His bidding to come!

"A loud report from the pistol followed my answer, and my boy lay gasping before me!

"'Mother, I did not mean it! God forgive me!' were the last words that ever passed those pallid lips.

"For weeks I knew nothing more."

"Oh, my friend, for me you have suffered over those dreadful days! Yes, yes; now I feel that I have never known trouble. Yours have been beyond endurance," said Mrs. Osborn, with deep feeling.

"Nay, my friend, not so. These troubles have had their soothing balsam.

"I had the great comfort of somewhat making amends to my daughter for the past neglect. In a few years Alice was deserted, and left in great poverty, by her husband. I found her, brought her home, and then it was she felt the blessing of a mother's love, and I the joy of soothing her sorrows. She lived only a few months, and passed away, leaving me another little Alice to cheer my solitude.

"With regard to my dear boy, even here I have a bright ray of hope. I think I was impressed by a good spirit to be firm. Perhaps most likely my boy might have lived on to meet even a worse end. I have since become fully convinced that my boy's end was not that of a willing suicide. A few weeks after I became a little stronger, a friend of George's came to me, and in a manner of great distress accused himself of my boy's fearful end, saying that he had been with George while he unloaded and cleaned his pistols that morning, and while George went off to get some more powder, he had finished the cleaning, and re-loaded them, intending to tell of it when George returned. But waiting until he became tired, he went home, thinking he would be back in the afternoon in time to explain that they were

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loaded again. So, my friend, you see my poor child thought only to frighten me; and the last words of his, 'I did not mean it,' were to say he did not know the pistol was loaded. Yes, yes, I feel sure that He who alone knows the heart pardoned my boy, and that I shall meet him when my days on earth are o'er!"

"Dear Mrs. Hartly, how can I thank you! Yes; I see how wisely I must act to save my children. How can I do this? You, who have suffered so, guide me."

"I will try to assist. Your mother instinct, with God's blessing, must guide you. First relieve your mind about the trifles. Do you not think Norah would put out the clothes to dry?"

"I would not dare ask her. I am afraid she might feel insulted, and go off too."

"Well, she seems to be very fond of Susie; get her assistance in this matter. Let Susie ask her, and offer her an extra dollar or a holiday. You might not be able to get a woman you would be willing to trust, if you should try to find one to-day, and lose much time. Call Susie and speak to her about it, and at the same time give her a cheering word."

Susie was called, and Mrs. Hartly's pleasant words soon induced her to try her influence with Norah. "And offer to assist her, Susie. These are the days when we have all to know how to work, even if it is not necessary for us to do it. If we wish to live comfortably, we must never let our servants see us ignorant of domestic duties, or we shall certainly be the slaves of their will. Busy hands, Susie, are an excellent remedy for the blues, which mamma says you have now," she added.

Mrs. Osborn followed her daughter into the hall, and said:

"Cheer up, darling. Don't worry about your father's

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harsh words. Yesterday he was not feeling happy. You must not tell Charles what he said. Let him come as usual. Mother will fix it all right with papa."

Susie, kissing her mother, went on; and very soon her merry laugh was heard, and Norah's following it.

The friends knew that *that* difficulty was settled. The next, the broken pitcher, was rather harder to manage. However, on examination, Mrs. Hartly found it could be mended, not to be much used perhaps, but so as not to be perceivable, except on very close examination.

"Carry it, or I will, to your china and glass merchant. He will have it mended, and at the same time we can get him to have one blown exactly like it. Say nothing about it to your husband, unless forced to do so. I do not believe in worrying gentlemen with our domestic troubles. They have sufficient in their daily business transactions. Meet them with a pleasant, cheerful face, and believe me, they would willingly be ignorant of such trifles."

"Indeed I feel much better already, my friend. I begin to see how easily these little things can be dealt with. Now about Susie?" said Mrs. Osborn.

"You have already begun rightly. Tell her father my own experience. Let the young man continue visiting her in her parents' home. She might otherwise be induced to meet him elsewhere. If she is fully determined to marry him, this treatment will not hasten it—most likely retard it. Harsh means would drive them to an immediate union, probably. Let her see you have confidence in her, and never say a word against her lover. Most likely she will in time see his faults herself. Induce her father to unite with you, and be as loving and kind as possible to her, and polite to Mr. Kent. Then it will be a hard thing for her to return you ingratitude or disobedience. And now with regard to Walter. Make his home more attractive to him.

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Let him have his friends here. He is sixteen, I think. Make more a companion of him. Let him accompany you about. Appeal to his manliness. Try in some way to keep him home this one evening particularly. To-morrow let him escort you to some place of amusement. Break up these evenings with his friends without letting him know you are doing it. Give him a small sum of money to use as he pleases. Try to get Mr. Osborn to treat him more kindly; get him to try this experiment for a few weeks at least, and I feel confident you will be amply repaid by the result."

"But, my dear friend, about having Walter bring his friends here. I fear they are not proper associates; probably very bad boys," said Mrs. Osborn.

"No matter; better have them here, than have him meet them in their haunts. I think he will either grow ashamed of them, or they will improve, and try to become worthy of your kindness. We cannot imagine how much good this may effect, both for him and his friends, yourself, and the mothers of these boys. Try it!. And now I must bid you good-bye. Let me hear from you soon. Keep up a cheerful face, and brave heart; all will be well."

When Mr. Osborn returned at noon, he was not, as usual, met with a list of annoyances, complaints, or repinings. A hastily picked up dinner was ready, which, being presided over by a bright, pleasant face, was very much enjoyed, during which Mrs. Osborn pleasantly told of the cook's leaving, and Susie's making her debut at the wash-tub, assisted by Norah. A cheerful atmosphere pervaded the whole house. Mr. Osborn caught it; forgot his bad feeling towards Walter, and spoke to him very pleasantly. The boy's face brightened, and in a few moments he said, in a hesitating manner:

"We have no school this afternoon, father. Is there anything I can do for you at the store, or anywhere?"

It happened, fortunately, that Walter's services were

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needed just then, and his father accepted the offer very pleasantly. The mother felt this was a favorable time for her to talk to her husband; and putting on her things, she accompanied him on his walk to his business. On the way she opened her heart, told her friend's experience, her own fears and hopes, and after a little persuasion he soon consented to her plans.

"Are you going out, Walter, dear?"

"Yes, mother, I have promised; but I will not be out after eight."

"I wish you would not. Or, go and excuse yourself to your friends, and if you choose, bring them here. You can have the dining-room all to yourself. Papa is going out, and sister wants to spend the evening with a friend, so I will be all alone."

"Are you going to send Walter to come and bring me home, mother?" asked Susie.

Mr. Osborn was still in the room, and the mother answered:

"Why, no, dear, Charles will be there; he will come home with you of course. I want Walter here; I do not like the idea of being here without some protector. Since the robbery of our neighbor's house, I feel a little timid."

A look of mingled surprise and pleasure was on the face of both son and daughter at the mother's answer, particularly as their father was present, and made no objection.

"Mother," said Walter, after his father went out, "the boys I am going to meet are a little rough, and—"

"Never mind, dear; no one will see them if you do not wish them to, unless I should drop in for a moment, and I know many boys are a little rough. You can amuse yourself in any way you choose."

"You would not let us romp, I know, and that's what we were going to do," answered the boy now, a frown appearing on his face.

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"Certainly, if you romp where you were going, I would sooner you romp here to-night," answered his mother.

Walter ran off, and in a very short time Mrs. Osborn heard him return with his friends.

During the evening she went into the dining-room, carrying with her some apples and cake; spoke kindly to the boys; told them they must come to see Walter whenever they felt like it, they would always have that room to themselves.

The next evening Walter went with his mother to the "opera;" and so, by one little ruse and another of the mother's, the nightly haunts were forgotten, not only by Walter, but by his friends, most of whom advanced with him on the march of improvement. Both father and mother are now confident as to their son's well-doing in the future. Before a year had passed over, Susie and Charles Kent found out that they did not love each other so very devotedly after all. Susie's eyes were soon opened to her lover's faults, and he thought she was a little too observant and particular to make a suitable wife for him. So he is now hunting out some one else to transfer his affections to.

Susie's evenings are now spent almost entirely in the company of George Fairwell, much to the joy of her father, who begins to think things are looking very favorable for the completion of his hopes.

Mrs. Osborn ever blesses the day that brought to her side Mrs. Hartly, whose sympathy and advice had so relieved her present annoyances and brightened her future prospect.

Mr. Osborn is often heard to say, that "hasty, unkind words and harsh treatment with the young people *may* drive them to speedy evil, and he is fully convinced that *his* plan of gentleness, patience, and forbearance towards our children can do no *harm*, but most likely bring to a happy conclusion all difficulties."

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AT HIS OWN FUNERAL.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.—SHAKESPEARE.

"'Tis no use, Ada. I believe these fellows are after your *money*, not you. 'Dying for you!' Yes, I know it. If I was a young girl, I'd like to feel sure I weren't *buying* a husband," said Aunt Charity, Ada Archer's nearest living relative, a spinster of uncertain age, but no proclivity in regard to the opposite sex. She had no faith in *man*kind. She had raised Ada from babyhood, and was devotedly attached to her niece, who returned her affections, but could not, to save her, think as Aunt Charity did about the boys. She had faith, in many, Harry Clayton in particular. "Oh, aunty, please, don't talk so! You cannot believe that of Harry!"

"Indeed, I do. If he was rich himself, may be I shouldn't. You send him off, and see if he will not try his luck with some other girl who has a fortune! He'll not pine away and die, I'll assure you."

"Aunty, you make me feel dreadfully. I have perfect faith in Harry Clayton. I believe he loves me for myself alone; and if I was to send him off, I'm sure he would not seek another love for a long time."

"Stuff, nonsense! Try it! Send him off; and then, if you find he's about dying, why, you can bring him back to life and you—should you please."

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"I will, aunty, just to prove to you and assure myself of his motives in wooing me."

Harry Clayton presented himself that evening, and Ada gave him the long sought for opportunity to speak his hopes, tell his love, and offer his hand. But all in vain. He was decidedly refused.

Ada had expected an outburst of grief and disappointment from her lover, and was much surprised at the quiet dignity of his bearing under this sorrow.

"Excuse me, Ada, for my presumption. I have misunderstood your kindness. I hoped you could return my love. Farewell! I shall trouble you no more." And after casting long, earnest looks into her eyes, he caught her hand, pressed it to his lips, and was gone.

"Well, he has taken it coolly enough. I am inclined to think as aunty says. Oh, dear, I wish I was not rich! And I wish I was *sure* Harry loves me for myself; for I do love him better than any one and every one else. May be he'll come back. I will give him a chance when I meet him again. Oh, Harry! Harry! Why did you not rave, and tear your hair, and swear you would not live without me—that you would shoot, drown, or hang yourself? Then aunty would have been satisfied. I'll wager anything she was listening somewhere. Oh, oh! I am afraid aunty is right," sobbed Ada.

If Ada could have witnessed the agony of despair and disappointment which was wringing poor Harry's heart, she would have been pretty well satisfied as to how he loved her.

"Lost! lost to me! What a fool I have been! How I drew life and hopes from her smiles. Oh, woman, how coldly cruel, how alluring, how deceiving! What have I now to live for? Nothing, nothing, save a ceaseless struggle with a hopeless love! I will not try to live without her.

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'Twill be easily cured, this aching heart. Soon this throbbing, fevered brain can find relief. Yes, yes; a little plunge, and I shall know no more sorrow. Hushed to sleep in the bosom of the beautiful water."

The waves rolled slowly up on the sandy beach, bursting at his feet with a softly musical little tone, which seemed to woo him on.

Throwing himself down beside the water, he drew from his pocket a little memorandum-book, tore out a blank leaf, and wrote:

"Farewell, Ada! Think sometimes of one who loved you more than life. The bright smiling water is whispering promises of speedy relief from all sorrow. I go to find it. Farewell, for ever. HARRY."

Folding and directing this, he placed it in the book, clasped, and threw it far back on the shore.

"*No, sir!* Not as long as my arms are strong enough to hold you! I was just in the nick of time. A few seconds later, and I should have had to take a plunge myself to save you. 'Nothing to live for?' Humph! Well, you do look sorter miserable! You're as wet now as if you had been in the water. And if you don't get somewhere very soon, where you can be made comfortable—I guess you can get to the other land without going through the water. You better live to learn the ten commandments, and try to get Master to forgive you for *almost* committing self-murder. Your will was good enough! I'll bet all my fish a *woman* was the cause of your trouble! If my mother hadn't been one, I'd say they are the pest of a man's life—trouble from the beginning, the end, and all the way along!"

"No, no! Man's greatest blessing!"

"Well, then, if that's the way you think, why don't you

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give them a chance of blessing *you?* Here, I'm going to put you in my boat, and take you home to-night. If you're feeling better in the morning you may go where you choose. There now, you're fixed. Now, while we are going along, I will just preach to you a little; that is, if you will give me the text. Is it money, or woman? Yes, I thought so. Because one woman doesn't love you, you're going to leave the world! I don't often get a chance to preach. Mother used to say I was cut out for it; I'm mighty fond of it I must confess! Now to begin—we'll talk about the sin by and by —'Tan't one bit smart; because, if she don't love you, it won't hurt her bad. If she does, and grieves for ever, you'll not know anything about if you leave the world. Bless my stars, if I haven't got an idea, and a bright one too! Just you write and bid good-bye to your girl, and tell her what you were going to do, and then you can find out how she takes it."

"I have, and but for your interference, by this time all my earthly care would have been ended. Oh! I cannot thank you!" said poor Harry.

"Don't trouble yourself about that. Dave Ketchum don't run on that line. Never was thanked, and never expect to be. What's the matter? Got the shakes? Bless me, the fellow has fainted, or gone dead, and I don't even know his name, nor where he belongs."

Nor could Dave Ketchum find anything on the person of Harry by which he could discover who he was, or where belonging.

So, plying his oars swiftly, he moved down the stream until he reached his home, a very humble one near the river side.

"It's always my luck. If I ever get a chance at preaching, I'm sure to be interrupted. Never mind; may be I may have the opportunity of finishing when this youngster comes to."

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But the "coming to" was a long way off. The chill and fainting was followed by a severe nervous fever, during which Harry was far more communicative than he would ever have been in his hours of health and sanity.

Dave knew his heart's history. For many days the kind fisherman almost despaired of seeing his guest restored to consciousness; but at length his efforts were crowned with Heaven's blessing. The faithful nursing, the soothing balms, proved Dave Ketchum, although not possessing a diploma, a pretty fair physician.

The crisis had passed, and our hero was convalescent, when his kind host ventured to leave him and go to the neighboring city to get his necessary supply of groceries.

Harry was sitting at the door watching for the return of Dave. The day had been very long without his cheerful companion, and now the sun was low down, almost sinking beyond the horizon, when at last the little boat came in sight. A little longer, and Harry heard the welcome sound of the oars striking against the water, and soon Dave was beside him, smiling and merrier than ever.

"Feeling pretty smart?" he said. "How would you like to take a row up to the city to-morrow? Think you're strong enough? I feel mighty anxious to take you up to the funeral of a very particular friend of mine, and yours too. Ha! ha! ha! To-morrow I shall see a sight I never expected to witness—a fellow attending his own funeral!"

"No, no! You do not mean—"

"Yes, I do. Ha! ha! ha! Didn't you write and tell them you were off for the other land? Bless me, if you don't look now like a spirit from there now! Here, just read that. What you was mighty nigh coming to—not in spirit, but body, sure."

Harry seized the paper handed to him, and read:

"The body of Harry Clayton, who has been missing for

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ten days past, was washed ashore during the storm last evening. It was difficult to identify it, owing to the length of time in the water. There is no doubt, however, of its being that of the much lamented person. The funeral will take place to-morrow, at four o'clock, from his late residence."

Dave Ketchum closely watched the face of the reader. "Now," said he to himself, "is the time to finish my preaching."

"My boy," he said, aloud, "aren't you thankful now, not to me, but to your Maker, that you were saved from that?"

"May Heaven forget me, David, when I forget to remember *you* with gratitude. You have not only saved me from a terrible crime, but, under God, will help me lead a better life. Yes, we must go up to-morrow to repair this mistake."

"And then you can find out, what you never would have known, if you had left this country, that's how your lady love, feels about it. My boy—I'm going to tell you now, how I came to be living alone here, away almost from all the world. Once upon a time, I felt just like you did, I loved a girl too, and believed she loved me. So she told me, at any rate. And I began getting together many little things to make a home for her. It was near the day she promised to make me happy—I went to see her—Ah! boy, it happened years ago. But it hurts yet. Well, she was gone—gone! A city chap with his fine clothes, and fancy airs, turned her poor little head—and stole her from me. Then I wanted to leave the country. I had nothing to live for—I forgot all my mother's holy teaching—forgot everything, but my own misery, and determined not to wait God's bidding—but, release my spirit from earth's sorrows. I came down here then, and was about to throw myself into the river—when I felt a strange feeling come over me, arms seemed clinging about me, drawing me back—and a voice, my mother's, was

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sounding in my ears. I knew it was her angel spirit, guarding, saving me. 'Back! back! my boy! Go back!—or you will find mother!' Then, I remembered *all*. And dropping on my knees prayed, as she used to teach me. 'Lead us not into temptation, Deliver us from evil.' I could not go back to live in the city, with her—my Mary that used to be. So I stay here, and built this little hut. I never have been tempted since. Now you know how well I can feel for you. Now to sleep, for we must make an early start in the morning," Dave said.

They started, but unforseen circumstances delayed their arrival until late. The funeral procession had already reached the "city of the dead." They stood around the open grave.

"Too late to interfere now. We might as well let the poor body have a Christian burial, whosever it may be," said Dave, and Harry agreed.

It was a bright, clear, but quite cool afternoon in the latter part of October, and Harry had been wrapped by the careful David in a large cloak. This and his slouched hat very much prevented his being recognized.

He stood quite near Ada. He heard her deep sobs. He caught a glimpse of her pale, sorrowful face.

"Remorse only for being the cause of my miserable end, as she thinks," thought Harry.

The grave was closed. The friends moved off, Harry and Dave with them. Ada still lingered. Harry stole back, sheltered from sight behind a neighboring tombstone.

"Dead! dead! and I the cause! Oh, would I were beside him! Oh, I loved you so dearly! Will you know it in the spirit land? I hope you will," he heard her murmur.

He stepped quickly forward, then hesitated, and thought he dare not reveal himself then and there—the effect might

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be very dangerous to his darling. Yes, then he knew she was really his!

His step startled Ada, and she fled quickly to overtake Aunt Charity. Harry, at the same time, by a short cut through the yard, came up with his friends at the gate just as Ada and her relative were about going through. He stepped forward, and held it open.

Aunt Charity bowed her head in acknowledgment of the polite attention, and raised her eyes to the face of the person.

A half-stifled scream escaped her lips. Ada glanced up. It was twilight then, and the deep shadow of the trees and tombs rendered it still darker. For a second only she hesitated, filled with horror.

Quickly recovering herself, she hurried her aunt along into the carriage waiting.

"Ada, what was it? His spirit?" whispered the old lady, in a voice trembling with fear.

"Only a resemblance, aunty. It was very dark just there, and we are both very nervous," said Ada soothingly.

Arriving home, Aunt Charity would not be induced to leave Ada's side for a moment, although the poor grief-stricken girl yearned to be alone with her sorrow.

"Ada! Ada! I know it was Harry Clayton's spirit, returned to torture me! Oh, why did I meddle with his love! why did I dare to judge and condemn him! No more peace on earth for me!" Aunt Charity continued to wail forth.

Harry Clayton was happy—yes, happier than he ever dreamed to be. He turned his face, almost radiant with joy, and gazed on his friend. Dave knew of what he was thinking, and how grateful he was. He grasped his hand, and said:

"Ah, Harry, now you see how she takes it. Truly in this case it is far better to *seem* than to *be*, ain't it?"

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Dave was always "brimful," and his wit and humor were always overflowing.

Aunt Charity sat with her head bowed on her hands, repenting deeply her interference and suggestions about poor Harry.

There was a ring at the hall bell. The servants had not returned; and she, for a moment forgetting her fears, went and opened the door.

Ada's ears were filled with a sound expressing the greatest terror. A scream from Aunt Charity, loud, long, and prolonged, and she came flying in, and hid herself behind her niece, exclaiming:

"Again his spirit! Lord deliver me! He is haunting me for being instrumental in causing his death!"

Ada had distinctly heard the bell ring. She knew 'twas from the pull of a mortal, and summoning up her courage, she was about going into the hall, when before her stood Harry, looking truly ghostly enough—so pale and thin—but smiling kindly, lovingly upon her.

Ada was neither given to fainting nor screaming, but for an instant her heart ceased to pulsate.

"Could such things be?" she thought.

"Ada, darling, do not be frightened!" he said.

"Ada, do spirits talk?" asked Aunt Charity, shaking and trembling as with an ague.

"Living, or dead?" asked Ada in a voice scarcely above her breath.

"Living, Ada, and loving you more than ever! You will not send me off again, darling?"

"Harry, Harry, I have always loved you," she whispered as she was caught in his arms and pressed to his breast, knowing then it was Harry, not dead, but living, loving, and forgiving.

"I know *now* you do, and have, love. But oh! Ada, why did you send me off?"

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"Only to try your love, Harry!"

"It has been a dreadful trial, Ada. Thank God, I am saved from a terrible crime, almost committed." And then he told his story, and how he was rescued; his illness preventing his returning, and relieving the fears of his friends.

He concluded by saying:

"You must know this friend, Ada—this good and wise man. I wish we could keep him always near us."

"I shall try to prove my gratitude, and my powers of persuasion too," said Ada.

Aunt Charity had gradually been taking into her mind the truth. At length she comprehended the whole. Oh what a weight of remorse was lifted from her heart! She had received a severe lesson, and profited by it.

By the next morning the glad tidings was generally known among Harry's numerous friends. They rejoiced to have their favorite among them again.

Aunt Charity went earnestly and heartily at work preparing the good things for Ada's and Harry's wedding, which took place a few weeks after the latter's supposed funeral. Ada's persuasive power proved availing. David Ketchum came to take charge of the fine plantation belonging to the happy couple.

A few years after this happened, David went away for a little visit to his friends: and returning, brought with him a handsome middle-aged woman, whom he introduced as his wife.

"Yes; at last I have got her! She is mine now. I found her alone. The past is forgotten; all, save the remembrance of the days of my hope and love *then*, and *now* secured. My Mary has had her sorrows too. But I shall try to make her happy, and give her cause to bless the day when I paused beside the river, and concluded to feed on fish myself, and not give them a chance to feed on *me*,"

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said David, who could not resist his ruling propensity for sending forth a spark of humor. He had a lively tongue, a merry heart. But beneath this was ever a spirit pure and earnest, God-loving and fearing, which shed forth its good influence on many, in deep and lasting impressions.

When once alluding to the temptation they had both passed through, he bowed his head reverently and said:

"My friend, we will constantly teach our children this prayer: 'Deliver us from evil.'"

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SAVED.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Could he help it, if my hand
He had claimed with hasty claim?
That was wrong perhaps, but then
Such things be, and will again;
Women cannot judge for men."—E. B. BROWNING.

THERE was a frightened look in the soft brown eyes of pretty little May Tudor as she gazed into those of her companion, the tall, dark man beside her. So young she seems with a face almost babyish in its expression of sweetness and innocence, that we can scarcely believe it possible the words are intended for her. But so it was. For many days she had resisted the pleadings of the tempter, urging her to fly with him. It had been a hard struggle, loving him as she did.

That night he had determined to make her choose between his love and her parents.

"Yes, May, I must be answered. Are you willing to give up my love for a whim of your parents? What right have they to choose a husband for you? Go with me, darling. They will soon get over their anger, and gladly welcome you back again. Tell me you will be mine, or bid me adieu for ever!"

"Julian, wait a little longer. Papa will yield after a while, I feel sure. I will coax him until he must. When he knows you more and better he will not object. How can

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I decide between two such loves? One so long enduring, so unselfish, so pure; the other so new, strange, yet oh, so sweet! Why cannot I keep both? Bear with me a few more days, and all will be well. My parent's blessing I must have on our union."

"Call it not *love* you bear for me, May. You know nothing of holy all-absorbing passion, which feareth nothing, hopeth all things, and is willing to give up all friends if necessary for the one object of this love. No, no, 'tis useless waiting. The old folks are prejudiced against me. They would feel no better if they knew me longer. They have fixed their hearts on a union for you with Mr. Noble. And you, with your very peculiar ideas on the subject of filial duty will yield. My idea is that parents should consider it a sacred duty, incumbent on them, to try and secure their children's happiness, not their own interest."

"Oh, Julian, dear papa *thinks* he is doing the best for my happiness, I know. But indeed, I will never yield to their persuasions against you. Nothing but your own act shall separate us. Yet I cannot wring their loving hearts by ingratitude and desertion!"

"Enough, May; I am answered. 'Tis useless to prolong this interview. I shall not annoy you with my pleadings again. Farewell—not only for to-night, but *for ever*. You have decided between duty and love. May you be happy in your choice. Farewell."

Flushed with anger and disappointment, Julian Dalton arose from his seat beside her, and moved slowly away. Every step was carrying him farther from her. Could she let him go—give him up? Never see him more? How sorely the poor struggling young heart was tried!

No, no! She sprang forward with outstretched arms. His keen ear caught the cry:

"Julian, come back! I cannot give you up!"

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He was beside her again, clasping her trembling form with his strong arm, and filling her ear with vows of love and devotion—promises of future happiness—until he had won her. Yes; she would be his—go with him. His home should be hers!

May Tudor was scarcely seventeen—a mere child, unsuspecting and trusting; believing all to be what they seemed, and her lover as true and good as herself.

She had met Julian Dalton, a few months previous, at a party given by the officers of a neighboring fort. He paid her marked attention; and she, like many girls, had a particular fancy for a lover with the uniform and "straps." Julian was handsome and fascinating, and little May's heart was easily won.

Previous to knowing Julian, May thought there was no one in the world any handsomer or better than Tom Noble, her play-fellow in childhood, schoolmate, and then would-be lover; but after Captain Dalton sought her love, Tom was soon made to feel his visions of love were over.

May's father gave not a bit of encouragement to the captain. He was disappointed that his favorite, Tom Noble, was turned off for a mere stranger; and he told May so, adding:

"You know nothing about this man, nor do I. Until he proves his worthiness, I shall not favor his suit."

All arrangements for the morrow were made, when May left her lover, and hastened home.

Her mother stood at the door, watching for her coming. She drew her in, saying:

"You are late, dear, and father was getting uneasy. How pale and sad you look! When shall I see you bright and merry again?"

The mother's arms were around her child, and drawing her up to her, she pillowed her head upon her bosom, and soothed her sweetly, gently, as in her baby days.

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May was sobbing, her heart almost bursting with conflicting emotions.

"There, darling! Do not grieve. Father is rather hard, but he will give in when he knows the Captain is worthy of you. He has written to find out something of him. You can afford to wait. I hardly can realize my little girl's wanting to leave her mother. Cheer up, now! and let your father see you smiling."

Mr. Tudor came in. He was so kind and loving. How her heart smote her for the return she was going to make them for all their affection.

"She would see Julian in the morning, tell him her father would soon yield, and plead for a little delay," she thought. "But no, she could not see him till the afternoon, when she had promised to be at the depot."

He had told her he should be on duty all day.

All night sleep never visited her pillow. Conscience was whispering continually of ingratitude; imagination painting pictures of coming evil; but love, with sweet pleadings, was the strongest. Conscience was silenced by whispers of atonement, and promises of forgiveness. The dark pictures were effaced, and in their place came those of a brighter hue, where peace and happiness reigned.

The hours flew swiftly by the next day, until the hour for parting came.

She told of going out for a walk, and they were glad to have her go, the anxious, loving parents.

"Good-bye, mamma!" And the pretty quivering lips were put forth for the usual kiss.

Oh, mothers! look well into your daughters' face—into her soft eyes—lingering with such an earnest, appealing look into yours. See, is there nothing there to cause you to clasp her young form in your protecting arms. Press her heart, so weak and yielding, close to your own. Hold her back, and by holy influence save her from evil!

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Loving and unsuspecting, Mrs. Tudor sent forth her daughter with a kiss and a smile. But from the mother's heart ascended to the mercy seat the constant prayer, "God bless and protect her!"

The distance to the depot was considerable, yet there was ample time, May knew; but fearing, she hardly could tell what—her own thoughts, most likely—she sped with almost flying feet, and reached the depot nearly an hour before the appointed time.

There were many persons in the ladies' room when May entered. She seated herself in a position that enabled her to command a view of all persons entering. She tried to get a little interested in the occupants of the room, hoping, in some degree, to stop the tumult within her bosom.

At length her attention was caught, and her mind diverted for a time, by a young mother and her babe—a beautiful little girl, who every now and then would clap her tiny hands, laugh and crow, then sink back apparently quite exhausted.

"She has been very ill, but is getting on nicely now, only very weak. For weeks I have known rest neither night nor day," the mother said, in answer to May's question about the babe.

"Let me have her a while. You look weak. I do not see how you can bear so much fatigue," said May.

"Mothers can bear any and everything for their children. Heaven bless my little love! She has been a great care for me; but she can repay it all by and by. She can love and comfort me in my old age," replied the mother, gazing fondly on the babe as she resigned her into May's arms.

"But will she?" asked a low, sad voice near them.

May turned quickly at this "home thrust," so unintentional, yet so keenly felt. Beside her sat a pale, delicate

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looking woman, clad in mourning robes. There was an expression of deep sorrow on her wan face.

May quickly moved off with the baby girl. "She was sad enough herself, without being oppressed with another's woe," she thought.

But her little companion did not serve to make her any more cheerful. The baby was perfectly quiet; but no smile would she vouchsafe, for all May's coaxing and playing with her, but continued to gaze into her face in that wondrous, wise-looking way that babies often do. Her large blue eyes seemed trying so hard to express so much. May was decidedly annoyed, and said to herself:

"I almost believe this babe is trying to give me a warning too. She seems looking very reproachfully in my eyes."

She stopped her efforts to please the babe. Her thoughts flew back to her own days of infancy, her mother's devotion, the remarks of the two women a few moments before.

"There is yet time to do right," seemed whispered in her ear.

She sprang up quickly, returned the babe to the mother's arms, and moved to the door. She then observed seated next the sad-looking lady a boy five or six years old. His face was strangely familiar. Where had she seen him before? She would have stopped to inquire, but glancing at the clock, she saw only fifteen minutes remained before the time of starting. Julian must be near. She dared not venture another interview with him. She was determined then to return to her parents.

She was just stepping from the door when she saw, some distance up the long street, but unmistakable for his fine figure and military bearing, her lover, Julian Dalton. Stepping quickly back, and crossing to an opposite door opening on the other street, she hastened out. But he had

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caught sight of her, and hurried in that direction. Faster and faster she walked; but it was impossible to avoid seeing and speaking with him. He was beside her.

"May, what means this?" he asked.

Just then a quick step came round the corner, and a young man approached them. An anxious, inquiring look was on his fine face as he asked:

"Where are you going, May? Excuse me, but your parents are terribly anxious about you. I came to find you."

Julian Dalton scowled darkly, and said:

"Miss Tudor has an engagement with me this afternoon!"

Another eager look from the young man as he asked:

"Tell me, May; am I in time? or does that man call you his?"

May could not answer a word. She was almost paralyzed with fear. The three stood gazing all anxiously then in silence. Julian Dalton broke the silence by saying:

"Miss Tudor, will you decide this matter, and end a very unpleasant interview? From you, sir, I shall demand an account for this impertinence at a more opportune time."

Tom Noble, for it was he, drew May's hand within his arm, and turning to Julian Dalton, answered:

"I am ready at any time, after restoring Miss Tudor to her parents. And you, sir, had better return to your wife, who even now is mourning for her unfaithful husband!"

May gasped forth, "Home! home! Take me home, Tom."

She did not raise her eyes to see the effect of Tom's words, or she would have seen that a guilty man was beside her. His whole bearing told plainly enough that he had been struck a blow sharp and keen, home to the very heart.

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Tom hurried his trembling companion to a carriage in waiting, placed her in, and said:

"Do not fear any trouble between Captain Dalton and myself. We both, for reasons equally dear, will avoid giving any publicity to this affair. I will explain all and prove the truth when I next see you."

He closed the carriage door and moved off.

May was soon pressed to her mother's heart—saved!

Mrs. Tudor told her child that Tom had written for Mr. Tudor to inquire concerning the captain in his native city. That he had only that morning received the intelligence of his having a wife living; and strange to tell, Mrs. Dalton was the sister of an old school-mate of Tom's, who had telegraphed that Tom must meet his sister that day at the depot.

May had received a severe shock, and in bitter agony of spirit she passed the night mourning over her lost hopes—lost trust! But the morning's light found her in a calmer state, not grieving then, but grateful for her escape.

The next day she received a visit from Tom, accompanied by Mrs. Dalton, whom May immediately recognized as the sad lady she had seen in the depot. There was no doubting the truth. The boy's face, that she had thought so familiar the day before, was then recognized. The strange resemblance to his father was unmistakable.

Little was known of the interview between Mrs. Dalton and May, except that the poor, sorrowing woman was then doubly stricken by the loss of her mother, whose mind had never entirely recovered from the shock received, when her child, despite all her entreaties, eloped with Julian Dalton; that afterward he had grown tired of her, and claiming some informality in the marriage ceremony, had deserted her, and this last blow had broken her mother's heart. It was for her the miserable woman was clothed in robes of mourning.

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May did not see Julian Dalton again, but she wrote to him:

"In deep gratitude to heaven for having escaped the great wrong you would have dealt me, I forgive you. Try to gain, from the one you vowed to love and protect, equal forgiveness. The mother of your boy may soon be won again. This affair is only known to my dearest friends. It will go no further. They, for my sake, will preserve its secrecy; I, for yours. I would not that your brother officers should look on you with reproach."

May was soon cheerful again; not merry, as her mother longed to see, but quite content and at peace.

Mr. Tudor was hoping to see Tom established in his old place, but his hopes were soon put to flight. Tom left the city to go into business, in a distant State, with Mrs. Dalton's brother.

May would occasionally receive a friendly letter, and frequently papers from him, but he never alluded to the past, or his feeling with regard to her.

Two years passed by, and then came a paper to May with a paragraph marked. May read the death of Agnes, wife of Captain Dalton. With the same mail came a letter from Tom. Alluding to Dalton, he said:

"I truly believe he has deeply repented the past. He was kind and attentive to Mrs. Dalton for many months before her death."

May read this with varied emotions. She was truly glad to know that Julian was not altogether evil. And then she wondered how it was that Tom should tell her this. Because he was so just; or was it that his love had all died out, been transferred to another? Ah! if May could have

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known that it was because he loved her still—more fondly, more devotedly than ever. It cost him a struggle too. But he must deal justly. And the remembrance of his father's constant reminder, "Tom, my boy, never let your *name* be above your *actions*," strengthened him in his resolve to do Dalton full justice.

A few months after this Tom visited his home, this time to find out if possible if there was yet a hope for him. He found May more beautiful than ever, cheerful, and happy. In vain he looked into her eyes to see if the old love was dead. He could not tell. They were unfathomable. And he saw nothing to bid him speak again.

Time wore on until another year had passed, and May re-received another letter from Tom, saying:

"I was surprised yesterday by a call from Captain Dalton. He came forward and offered his hand. I took it, believing him now to be an honest man, and worthy the love of woman. He spoke of you, May, and inquired if you were still free. I think you will see him before long. May, my most earnest prayer is for your happiness. That is more to me than life."

How did May receive this news? Had her love all died out? Yes, yes; nothing but the whitened ashes remained; Julian Dalton came and found it so. How bitter was his punishment! She sent him away as kindly as possible—gently, yet so firmly, that no hope remained in his breast of ever winning her back to love and trust.

Poor Tom was making himself miserable. May's happiness was secured, he thought, and now nothing more remained in life for him, when he received a letter from his sister, with the news of May's rejection of her former lover, and a hint that if Tom came home then, his long devotion might win a reward.

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He had great faith in his sister's words. He went; and before the summer months had passed, she was his!

The wedding was a quiet one. Among the presents was found a little box, the contents of which, with the note inclosed, were held of higher value than all the more costly gifts.

May's eyes were dim for a moment as she read:

"Will you accept and wear this ring? It was hers. She died with words of love for you lingering on her lips. She knew your purity had secured her what she had so nearly lost. Thank God it was so!"

As Tom placed the diamond circlet on her finger, he said:

"Yes, wear it, dear! Poor Dalton! I wish he was happy too."

Julian Dalton's days of disappointment and sadness were few. Before Petersburg he fell, mortally wounded, gallantly leading his men. He lived but a few hours, during which he wrote to May a few lines, almost unintelligible from their tremulousness, and in many places the paper was stained with his life-blood.

"Take my orphan boy. Love him. He will soon be all alone. I loved you madly, and would have won you even to woe. This love for you made me a better man. I may hope to meet you where love is for all!"

Little Julian is fondly loved by both Tom and May. His orphan heart has never been allowed to feel the loss of either mother or father. The latter lies sleeping with the fallen braves of Arlington, his faults forgotten, his virtues cherished.

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THE BABY'S SPIRIT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"MUST you go?" asked a sweet, faltering voice. And Stanley Morely turned, a look of annoyance on his handsome face, and answered, in a slightly impatient tone,

"I really must. Well, what is it?" he asked, as the beautiful eyes sought his, with such an appealing expression.

"Oh! I cannot tell, Stanley; if you would only stay with us to-night! You know I have not asked you for a long, long time. I am impressed with such a weight of gloom—of some coming sorrow. I hardly know how to express my feelings. But do not go from us, my husband."

She came to him and clasped his hand as if to hold him back.

It had been a long time since she had begged him to stay, or remonstrated against his neglect. Stanley Morely remembered it well. And for an instant his heart was touched, and he felt that he would rather remain with his wife and child, than go to his accustomed place of resort. But his word was pledged, and go he must. In a kinder tone, placing his arm around her, he said:

"Oh, you are nervous, that's all. Cheer up! I will not be late to-night. I wish I could remain at home. But, Nellie, my word is given. You know, a man of honor cannot break his word. Now smile. I will not go out to-morrow night. In fact, I must do better than that. I'm get-

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ting tired of the club-room. Nay, not another word," playfully putting his hand over her mouth: "I must keep my word."

Had her lips moved to tell the thought that filled both brain and heart then! His word could not be broken to his fellow-man; his honor was involved. Where were the promises whispered in the ear of a trusting, confiding woman? Where, the vows made at the altar of God? Where? Gone—strewn to the winds; disregarded and forgotten. Before Heaven a guilty, perjured man. With his companions, the world, his honor still untarnished. He put her gently from him, and approached the lounge, and bending lovingly over his little girl, asked:

"Are you asleep, Lilly? Bye-bye. Papa's going now."

She raised her sweet face to his, and whispered:

"Most to sleep. Must papa go?" stroking his face.

"For a little while, darling. Kiss me now good-bye, for an hour only."

As the door closed, and his steps were heard in the hall, the mother caught Lilly up, and whispered hurriedly:

"Call papa, Lilly, and beg him not to forget to come back soon."

The little lips were parted to do her bidding, but only a hoarse sound came forth, and Lilly whispered:

"Mamma, you call. Lilly's got a cold! she can't call. Lilly will whisper to papa."

"Stanley, stop a moment; Lilly wants you," called Nellie, as his hand was on the door knob.

He came back, holding out his arms, into which his darling sprang, clasping him lovingly around the neck.

"Papa, do come soon back. Lilly's most mind to keep her arms round papa's neck ever and ever, and hold him, so he can't go to those bad men, and stay away from mamma and Lilly," she whispered in his ear.

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"My little treasure, I will not stay long. Nellie, she has taken cold; give her some drops. Let me go, that I may get back soon."

With another kiss, he gently unwound the little clinging arms, and placing her in Nellie's, hurried out.

Five years before, when Stanley Morely married the lovely Nellie Howard, every one declared her most fortunate in having secured a man of such brilliant prospects; the only child of wealthy parents, and one of the most promising young lawyers of the city.

How it was Stanley was first induced to leave the society of his beautiful wife, or whether he had acquired a fondness for the gaming table before his marriage, it is difficult to tell. If the latter, he had guarded his secret well; for he was believed beyond reproach. For several months he was all that the most exacting wife could have wished. Gradually it came: first one and another excuse for his absence and late hours. "A meeting;" "the lodge;" "our club-night." Then more frequent, until excuses ceased; and every night, with the remark, "Well, I'm going to the club now," he left his wife and little girl.

With a trembling heart, Nellie saw his business neglected, his health failing. Almost daily she was subjected to the deep mortification of having impatient creditors pressing settlements of their claims. In vain she had plead with him; until at length, despairing of any change for the better, she sank into a state of quiet submission.

When Stanley bade his little girl good-bye, he fully intended going to the saloon, excusing himself, and returning immediately home. But his companions would listen to nothing of the kind. And one ventured the remark that "Mr. Morely feared a reverse of his good fortune of the night before. Stanley had been in high luck then, and the speaker had suffered much, in consequence. Others sang

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out, "Yes, yes; you must give him a chance of revenge." He could not resist. Throwing himself into a seat, he began to play.

An hour passed, another and another, and still fortune favored him. He could not withdraw. Insinuating remarks reached his ear, that made him remain and play on.

At twelve o'clock he grew uneasy, dreadfully so. A sweet voice was sounding in his ear, calling him home. Wilder, more beseeching it grew. The little arms seemed about him then, drawing him away. He started up. He must, he would go home. The luck had changed. He knew it not. Mechanically he had thrown down the cards. His thoughts were of the sweet child at home. Again a cool, well-directed shaft reached him. The voice has grown weaker that seemed calling him. Pshaw! he was nervous; so much loss of sleep had made him so. No sound reached his ears then, but those of his companions. The baby's pleading tone had ceased. He began again, and played on until all were willing to stop.

Leisurely he traversed the streets homeward. There was no need of haste then. The weary eyes had long since ceased their watching, and were closed in sleep, he hoped. Yes, Lilly's eyes were closed; she was sleeping. They would not seek his, with a reproaching look, on his return.

He neared the house. From the opposite side of the street he saw, through the partially drawn curtains, strange forms moving about his room.

His heart gave a quick bound of terror. Something was wrong. Was Lilly ill?

With hasty strides he crossed the street. With trembling fingers he placed the key in the lock. As he entered the hall, low, piteous moans disturbed the stillness of the night. Another instant, and he was standing beside the bed where Nellie was kneeling, her arms still clasping the little

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lifeless form of her child. His child, his Lilly, whose loving caress seemed still warm about him, her pleading voice still sounding in his ear, lay still, pale and cold before him. Her pure spirit had fled to a Father whose love never faileth. Her frail little life had yielded, a speedy victim to that terror of all mothers, croup.

For weeks after this terrible shock, Stanley Morely plunged more wildly into scenes of dissipation and vice—drinking more frequently of the wine cup. Friends gathered ,round, earnestly endeavoring to reclaim him, but in vain. The poor stricken wife still clung to him. Every night she watched and waited his coming—her heart ever filled with dread of some new sorrow.

It was a wild, terrible night in November—such a night that no human would venture from shelter except forced by the direst necessity. Never was music, with its soft and sweetest strains, so soothing as those wild, tempestuous sounds from without, as they filled Nellie Morely's ears. That night he would be safe with her—that night her eyes might cease their watching, her anxious heart grow still.

Stanley threw himself on a lounge, and soon was lost in slumber. He had not been drinking as much as usual that day, and his sleep was sweet and quiet. Nellie watched him as he lay. His expression was different from the usual one. She shaded the cheerfully burning fire, and turned low the gas, that he might sleep on. And then she knelt and prayed —prayed as she had not for a long, long time. And a spirit of peace grew in her; she hoped again; she prayed once more with faith.

How long she knelt she knew not. She was aroused by a slight movement of her husband. Looking up, she saw his arms extended, and heard him murmur:

"Lilly, come to papa."

Again he grew quiet. She knew he was dreaming of his child. There was a sweet, gentle smile playing about his

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lips, and frequent words of endearment escaped him. He dreamed on; the smiles faded away. A weight of sorrow gathered on his still handsome face. His lips trembled, and from beneath the quivering eye-lids tears stole gently down, bringing the tidings of a heart touched and softened by some magic power.

"Oh, God grant it might be thus in his waking hours," Nellie murmured.

A little longer and he sprang up from his slumber, gazed wildly into the mirror opposite, and cried out:

"'Tis no dream. Lilly, my darling, you are with me, your dear arms still clasping me. No more—never again will I grieve your gentle heart!"

He sank back again upon the lounge, passed his hand again and again over his brow, and then called softly:

"Nellie?"

In an instant she was beside him.

"Have I been sleeping?"

"Yes, dear."

"And dreaming?"

"Sweetly, Stanley; dreaming of our child."

"Would to God that dream had been forever; that I had fallen into that last sleep! You would be happier then, Nellie."

She came to him in the fond, loving way of days gone by, and said:

"Look at me, Stanley!"

He gazed with an inquiring look on the face upturned to his. The old, weary, suffering look was gone. Never, in the early days of her fresh, bright beauty, was she so lovely as then. An expression inexpressibly sweet—a patient, hopeful, aye, peaceful look, was on her pale face. Clasping her to his bosom, Stanley said sadly:

"Poor child! you have been dreaming too—dreaming of days that may never come again."

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"Nay, my husband; if I have dreamed, mine were waking dreams, that have filled my heart with peace."

"And Lilly—has she been with you? Oh, that was no dream! Never, in the days when she was with us, did I ever see her plainer."

She would not strive to dispel the delusion, or tell of fitful shadows thrown about the dimly lighted room, fashioned by the thoughts that filled his brain into the form of his darling child. No, no; vision or delusion, it was all in wisdom sent.

Stanley Morely was a changed man from that night. The old haunts knew him no more. The reformation was sudden, but complete.

Nellie, prudent little woman, asked no questions. She believed some time her husband would tell of that dream. And so he did. When, many months after, she placed in his arms another little child, a bright, beautiful boy, he said:

"Another link in the chain to hold me firm against temptation. Another whose little arms will cling around me, and draw me back from evil. One on earth, and one in heaven—Lilly, whose spirit seems ever with me. Nellie, ever since that night, as in the dream then, Lilly's arms I feel about me, her sweet face pressed lovingly to mine, while she pleadingly whispers: 'Dear papa, don't take Lilly there, among bad men; it hurts Lilly, frightens her so much!' That dream, my wife, and the vision as I awoke, were my salvation. Never again could I enter such scenes as I knew would distress and terrify her pure spirit, which I truly believe is a guardian angel sent."

Happiness as true as earth can give was Nellie's evermore. She no longer mourns Lilly's loss. Now she feels why she was sent to them to fill their hearts with love, and why recalled to her home among the angels.

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A HERO'S LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"CLARA."

Her head was in sadness bent, and so lost in thought was she, that neither the approaching footstep nor the pleasant voice was heard. A moment more, and a gentle touch fell on her shoulder, and she raised her eyes to the handsome, noble-looking man standing over her.

"What troubles you, my child?" he asked, gazing lovingly into her eyes.

"Why do you think I am troubled?" she asked, trying to smile.

"Because, my child, I, just a few moments ago, met Albert Morrill. He was looking very miserable. I come in here, and find you looking much the same. So I know there is trouble between you."

"Yes, dear sir, there is—trouble that can never grow less, I think. Albert has gone away in much sorrow, and I grieve that it must be so," said Clara, in a low, tremulous voice.

"He loves you truly, I believe, my child, and I have thought you not indifferent toward him; indeed, had hoped to see you united. He is most worthy, surely. Tell me why you have sent him off?"

For a few moments the young girl remained silent. Then, glancing up into his eyes, with a wavering look in her own, she asked:

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"Do you not think, when a girl marries, if there is any difference in their ages, the husband should have that advantage?"

There was a merry twinkle in the gentleman's eye then, as he answered:

"That depends entirely on the character of both; but, as far as I am interested, I prefer the advantage on the wife's side."

Clara looked astonished, but said gravely:

"I do not. That is why I shall never marry Albert. I am older than he by quite five years, and so I have told him."

"Clara, this very decision proves how young in experience and child-like you are. Albert is older and wiser by ten years, if not in days, weeks, and months, in constitution and experience. Have you never seen men prematurely old, and women who are ever young? Thus I am sure it will be with you, if you are like your mother."

Clara shook her head, and the gentleman asked:

"What think you of your mother and me? Are we not very happy?"

"Oh, yes. But you are so much older than mamma. She being so young and beautiful, there is no fear of your love ever wandering from her; while you, I think, if she had sought the world over, she could not have found one of whom she is so proud, or could be so happy with," answered Clara, looking on her stepfather with pride and fondness in her glance.

Thank you, my child. Now let me tell you, your mother came into this world just seven years before I gained an entrance here; but it would be perfectly absurd for me to say she was seven years older, would it not?"

"Oh, yes, indeed it would. I had no idea of this. But it is a very rare case."

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"By no means, my dear. There are many such, and many causes why it should be. The constitution, disposition, exposures, business cares, and such, may make men old beyond their years. Ah, I see what you are about to say. Yes, certainly, women have their manifold cares. Some of them sink under them. Others, like your mother, blessed with such elasticity of spirits, good health, and everything else that make women most charming, never grow old.

"Now, I want to tell you a little story. Many years ago, in a far Western State, came a young lady as governess in one of the best families there. Her pupils being only three little girls, their father proposed, so as to make this teacher's duties more interesting, as well as remunerative, to permit some of the neighboring children to share the advantages secured for his own. Among them came a boy of thirteen. His name—well, no matter about that; we will call him Harry. When Harry's father brought him to the young teacher, he said:

"'He is not advanced well for his age, and is not very apt. He has had a poor chance for obtaining instruction; but I hope he will not give you much trouble.'

"'Indeed, I am sure he will not. He has a good head, and if not apt at his books, neither is he apt to do anything that is not good and right, I think,' answered the young lady, in a sweet, encouraging tone.

"Harry had seen, at his entering the school-room, how beautiful she was; but from the instant those kind, sweet words reached his ear, his fate was decided. A love came into his heart that would never grow less—love to be the one love of his life. Daily with her, it grew greater, stronger. How could it be otherwise? She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen; the most intellectual and refined, and in every way the best he had ever known.

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Aye, even the mother that he dearly loved became second in his heart then. He studied, because it pleased his loved teacher. At first it was very difficult for him to acquire his tasks; but he was working for her, and soon it grew easier. For her he would grow great, he determined; for her he would be good. He truly worshipped her. Not an hour would he lose from her society that he could possibly help. The time of recreation, when the others were playing, he lingered with her. When she would say, 'Harry, go out and enjoy the beautiful sunshine,' he would plead to remain with her. And when at last she grew to know how much more pleasure it gave him to be with her, she did not bid him go. To be with her was the sunshine to him: aye, it was heaven. How he dreaded when the time for going home came! The hours until seeing her the next morning seemed ages. Every possible excuse he seized to see her on Saturdays; and Sundays, at church, he would sit where he could watch her all the time. Occasionally when she would come to visit his home, he would hover about her, watching every chance to offer some little attention; fruits, flowers, the best, were always carried to her.

"The boys and girls, too, would call him 'the teacher's shadow.'

"Once he heard some one say he 'feared Mr. Archer would not keep the teacher long.' Then for the first time came the thought of separation. He believed that when it came he must surely die. Just a year she had been his teacher when the hour of trial came. Thinking it best, the news, which they knew would grieve so much the children's hearts, was kept from them until the last possible hour. When she came to bid him good-bye he could not speak, but only cling to her hand as if to hold her back. She saw how he suffered. Taking from her pocket a daguerreotype case, she put it in his hand, saying:

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"'Here, Harry, is my picture. Now you can still see me every day. Say good-bye, and let me go.'

"She bent over and kissed him, and hastened away. Harry fled to the woods, remained all day, and at night his father found him, and carried him home, where his sister teased, and tried to laugh him 'back to his senses,' as she said. A few days after, he heard from Mrs. Archer that their dear teacher had gone home to be married. A little while longer, and he was shown her wedding cards.

"And now, Clara, dear, we must leave the poor, almost heart-broken boy, and follow his loved teacher. She had married one to whom she had been engaged ever since she was scarcely more than a child. A few months only of happiness was hers. Easily influenced, her husband yielded to temptation. The wine cup could not be resisted. Bad men called themselves his friends, and lured him on. His once abundant means were lost at the gaming table. His health soon failed. Four years after, she, who had been a happy, hopeful bride, was widowed, and almost penniless. A little was saved from the wreck—only sufficient, with the amount she obtained by teaching music, to secure for her and her little three-year old girl a comfortable, but very humble home.

"Time passed on. The beautiful widow was universally admired. Suitors she would have had—many if she could have been drawn from her seclusion. But she rejected all advances from a few who, more persistent than others, obtained an introduction. In the society of a few old friends and her child she was content.

"When ten years a widow, the war broke out. In her far northern home she watched with the deepest interest the career of many of the young men from her own town. The papers were filled with accounts of the gallant and daring deeds of many brave men. For the next three years she

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had work enough to do, making comfortable clothing for the absent ones.

"One day, while thus busily engaged, she was surprised by her little daughter coming up stairs bringing the card of her pastor, accompanied by another bearing the name of General ——, a name so well known to her—to everybody then—a name the press seemed never tired of using, and in a very pleasant way, too. He could not complain. Why her pastor should bring him to call on her the widow could not imagine, but at length came to the conclusion that the kind minister, knowing how much she had done for the soldiers, brought, to thank her perhaps, one of their leaders. And so she was well pleased. But the second day after, the General called again, alone, and the next evening following, and ere a week had passed he seemed as quite an old friend. But what was he coming for? And the widow for a moment thought possibly her child—her little fifteen year old Clara.—Oh, I had not intended—"

"Oh, do you not think I have discovered who that General is?" said Clara, laughing, and catching his hand fondly in her own.

"You do not know yet who he was," answered her stepfather.

"Well, on with my story.—No, that grave, middle-aged man could never think of such a child. Well, she soon knew for what he came, and I think the knowledge was not unwelcome. She had grown to like a little her soldier lover. But when he told her of his love, and asked her to be his wife, she said:

"'This is so very sudden! You have known me scarcely more than a week—'

"'Pardon me,' he said, stopping her. 'I have known you for many years, and loved you as long. Only you have I ever loved. Look at me! Try if you cannot recall me.'

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"She shook her head.

"'Nor my name?'

"'Indeed I cannot. I know your name, because it is known to fame—only so,' she answered.

"'Only think of it. All these long years, that you have thought you were unloved,' he continued, 'I have been loving you so truly, so devotedly, that never, for a moment, has any other woman moved my heart. And never, during all this time, have you thought of me,' he said, with a touch of sorrow in his tone. 'You have been the star that has guided me; you the talisman that kept me from evil; you the goal for which I have striven. All I am, you have made me. All I have, I place at your feet. Oh, what else could have cheered me, but your dear image, when suffering in the hospital those long, dreary days? On the battle-fields I have been nerved to greater exertion, because I was fighting for your country as well as mine—fighting under and for the flag you loved. Daily I have gazed on this'—he drew from his bosom an old-fashioned, time-worn daguerreotype, and placed it in her hand—'and renewed my vow to be worthy of your love—aye, and win it too.'

"'Where did you get this? Who gave it to you,' she asked, in great surprise.

"'You gave it to me, aye, and kissed me at the time.'

"'You! Oh, what can you mean?' she exclaimed.

"'Do you not remember your pupil—your boy adorer?'

"'No, no! 'tis not possible. Little Harry, you! the country's pride! Can it be?' she cried, putting out her hand then, as if to welcome him. He clasped it, drew her toward him, looked eagerly into her eyes. Ah, she saw in his the love and devotion of years; for she drew not away, nor turned away her face, when he said:

"'And now may I, who for your sake have never pressed my lips to woman's, save mother and sisters—may I kiss you?'

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"She smiled. He knew he had won her at last. Clasping her to his breast, he pressed his lips to hers, and said:

"'Speak to me! Say one little word of love, for which I have waited, worked, and prayed so long.'

"Well, dear, she said enough to make him very happy. And so I won her."

"But when you knew she was married, did you not despair then?" Clara asked.

"For a little while only. But I worked on. After I heard of her widowhood, I had greater faith then; I never doubted more. I knew such entire devotion, such love as mine, must meet heaven's approval, and be crowned with success at last. Now you see why I think so favorably of Albert's love," answered the General.

"Ah, but your love was tried and proven. Surely never did man love so well. Albert's is not long lived, and might grow cold; and—"

"No, no, my child. If tried, I am sure it would prove just as true; for you, my little Clara, are enough like your mother in loveliness, to hold very firm your husband's love. Now I must plead, and your heart pleads with me, for Albert! And I must insist, and so I am sure will he, that if you did reach this world a few years in advance of him, you cannot call yourself older. It's ridiculous, perfectly. I am going out now. May I make that poor, miserable fellow happy, by sending him back again?"

She smiled, and although she neither whispered Yea nor Nay, he knew that all would be well. And in his own great happiness he had helped to make them happy also.

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POST-MISTRESS OF PEEKVILLE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"You must turn from the loveliest maiden away,
If she comes not endowered in silver and gold."

"SAINTS alive! if it an't getting on to ten o'clock! The mail boy will be here in less than no time! Jim, poke up that fire, and have the kettle a boiling in a jiffy now!" exclaimed Miss Prudence Pieper, the postmistress of the village of Peekville in Virginia. And starting up, she glanced up the road, as the clatter of horse hoofs reached her ear.

"Yes, here he comes! And I'm not fixed for delivery! And the time that I ought to spend in examining the letters, I'll have to be putting on my things. This all comes of my losing so much time trying to convince that hard-headed boy what is best for him. After all I've done for him! Giving him a college education, and raising him to be what he is—good enough to be the husband of the best girl in the State. And that's just what I'm after him about; but no, he can't see it so. He wants to go throw himself away on that poor governess, with her pale face and fine airs. A body would think she was a young queen, instead of a poor school-ma'am. There's Col. Raymond's daughter, the richest girl in this State, would give her eyes for him. But no—"

"Here's your mail, Miss *Peeper!*" cried the boy, at the same time throwing the bag on the porch.

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"That's not my name—*Peeper!* I've told you often enough now!"

"Folks say as how it *ought* to be!" answered the young scamp, with a sly twinkle in his eye.

"Be off with you, you young rascal, and take your mail! —here it is!"

"Miss *Peeper*, don't you wish you could change your name? And *don't* you wish some day a *male* would stop *here*, and take a shine to you? Would you deliver that *male* to any other body? Ha! ha! ha! Don't hit me, Miss Peeper. I'm off."

And with his merry laugh still ringing in her ears, Miss Pieper slammed the door, closed the window, and proceeded to undo the mail-bag.

"That boy will be hanged yet. What can he mean by saying 'folks say my name ought to be *Peeper?*' Can they suspect—Jim, you can run out to play, and when folks come, say the mail is being assorted. There, go on; I can attend to my work better when I'm to myself."

One after another letter and paper was scrutinized by the post-mistress and put in its place.

"Nothing I care to see this morning—same old things. Stop! here's a letter for Clara Raymond, in a man's hand. If that girl's gone and got a lover I'll—I'll see—" And Miss Prudence held the envelope close to the mouth of the boiling kettle. A moment more, and she held the letter open in her hand.

"Oh, I'm relieved! Only a bill. Dear me, what lots of fine things she has been getting! What a great and useful thing a kettle of boiling water is! No one can ever say I broke open a letter, without lying—under a mistake. There, I'm through. Now I'll put on my cap and be ready for delivery."

While Miss Prudence stood before the office window, her

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nephew, the handsome Charles Osborn, was walking with the lovely May Rositer, in the beautiful grove near by.

He was pleading earnestly with the gentle May; but she shook her pretty head, and in tones decided, but filled with sadness, she said:

"No, no, Charlie; I cannot promise to be yours. Your aunt dislikes me, and I will never be the cause of trouble between you. You are deeply indebted to her, and she has a right to expect you to marry one who will be agreeable to her. She has been a mother to you, Charlie, and you must regard her wishes. I must send you away now. The little girls are coming for me. It is near school time."

"Oh, May, you talk so calmly of giving me up, while I am almost heart-broken! Can you really love me?"

A look from the soft brown eyes was his only answer. But it was enough, and he said quickly:

"Forgive me, May. But will nothing alter your determination?"

"Nothing but your aunt's change of feeling, which I fear will never be. My poverty is the only reason for her objection. And unless some fairy godmother should come and give me riches, Miss Pieper's dislike will never grow less," answered May, her eyes filling with tears. But she tried to smile—a faint, sickly little smile it was.

And Charlie longed to clasp her to his heart, and, despite all opposition, to hold her as his own forever. The little girls were beside them, and Charlie could only say:

"I must see you again. I shall leave home in a few days, to be gone a long while. I may come before I go?"

May nodded assent, and encircled by the arms of her fond little pupils, proceeded to the house. A couple of hours after, the little girls, Lilly and Rose Hawthorn, were in the music-room for the purpose of practising. Lilly ran her fingers over the keys, and struck a few chords, and then whirled quickly around, and said:

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"Oh, I can't play. There is no music in my heart. It is filled with harsh, discordant thoughts. Oh, I wish I was a fairy, that I could make dear, sweet May Rositer happy! And I wish, more, that I had the power to change that disagreeable, selfish, hard-hearted Miss Prudence Pieper into a pleasant, charitable, and considerate woman!"

"Oh, yes, I know what you mean! I heard what Miss May said, as we joined her. How sorry I am for her! I wish she was rich. I'm sure she ought to be. She must have been once, I think. Don't you, Lilly? She seems so accustomed to everything elegant. And then it must have cost a great deal of money to have educated her. She knows everything, I think—"

"No, she does not. *I* know one thing more than Miss May, and that is, how to deal with that hateful Miss *Peeper*, and her name and fame have given me the idea!"

"What is it, Lilly?" asked Rose.

"You will know all in good time. Do you think Mr. Osborn is good enough for Miss May? Will he make her happy?"

That was a question for grave consideration, truly, and the little maidens seemed fully to appreciate it, for their bright faces grew grave and earnest. The conference was assuming a very solemn nature, which was highly amusing to a third person, who had entered unobserved, and, no longer able to restrain his mirth, broke out in a fit of coughing, to disguise the laugh, and both girls exclaimed:

"O Gus! You here listening?"

"Yes; only came in a moment ago, though—"

"But you heard—"

"Your last question? Yes; and, divining the person, can answer it. He is a capital fellow; as good as the best, and as true as the needle to the pole! About the happiness, that will depend much on herself, I think. But he has

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made me happy many times, I know. I'd like a chance to give him a return, if I could," said Gus, the sage little maiden's brother, a young lad who looked forward with great eagerness to the coming year, which, to use his own words, "would make him the owner of a very valuable piece of property," namely, Augustus Hawthorn, Esq.

The matter under consideration was entered into with much zeal by Gus; and after Lilly had given her idea about the way to deal with Miss Prudence, the young plotters came to the conclusion that, under their management, affairs concerning young Charles Osborn and their governess might assume a more favorable light.

Miss Prudence was more than ever determined on making a match between her nephew and Colonel Raymond's daughter, after the young lady had called that morning for the mail, and was so charming, and came in and sat a half hour to chat with her.

"It's no use thinking about any other girl for him. I'm not agoing to let him throw himself away. It's my duty to do the best I can for him, and I'm going to. That governess has a deal of pride, and will never come where she's not wanted. So I'll let her see, plain enough, Sunday, after church, that I don't want her to be connected with me in any way—that I will!"

And so she did, an excellent opportunity offering. After the service was over, Miss Prudence was moving majestically down the churchyard, smiling and bowing to her many acquaintances, when the merry little Lilly called to her, saying:

"Miss Prudence, brother is going to New York to-morrow. Have you any commissions?"

Lilly stood with her hand clasped in May Rositer's, when Miss Prudence approached. Thanking Lilly for her kindness, and inquiring after the health of Mrs. Hawthorn, she

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stood for several moments by May without noticing her save by a passing glance, but by no means a pleasant one; and she bade Lilly good-by, and sailed on.

"I think I let her and others see I had no good feeling for her," said Miss Prudence, with much satisfaction.

The next morning Gus called by, on his way to the depot, and Miss Prudence could not resist the desire to find out what Gus was going to New York for. So, after many roundabout questions, she drew out the knowledge she was after.

"On Miss Rositer's business! Dear me, it's very kind of you," said Miss Prudence.

"Oh, don't imagine that, Miss Pieper. Something more than kindness carries me. It will pay me well. But Miss Rositer is very quiet about her affairs. Ha, there's the whistle! I must be off." And bidding a hasty adieu, Gus ran off, leaving Miss Prudence's mind very much exercised.

"What can it be? What does he mean by 'pays well,' and 'keeps her affairs quiet?' I'd give a dollar to know!"

"Before the end of the week, the village postmistress held in her hand a document which, she felt quite sure, would throw some light on the subject: a large, business-looking envelope, directed to Miss Rositer.

"How lucky for me it an't done up in that old-fashioned way, with sealing-wax, like some of Colonel Raymond's! Bah! I detest that way. This is the right way. Now let us see."

And from the steamed envelope she drew the letter, and proceeded to read a few lines, and an exclamation of surprise escaped her lips. A little more, and she gasped for breath, recovering sufficiently to proceed on with her reading to the end of the first page. Then she dropped the epistle, and sunk into a chair, exclaiming:

"Land of liberty! I'm no longer worthy of my name. I

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might have knowed it, she holds her head so high, and has such lady ways with her. Oh, if I had not put that finishing stroke, Sunday, I might have fixed it up right!"

The letter was picked up, and again Miss Prudence read it over, part of which she really groaned forth: "How will you have your dividends invested? the interest on your bonds amounting to fifteen hundred dollars now. Shall we forward by Mr. Hawthorn, or invest again? Please let us hear immediately from you on this subject. In regard to the house on Fifth avenue, we think it advisable to raise the rent to two thousand dollars, should it meet your approbation."

"Good Lors a mercy! what a fool I've been. Charlie said she was worth more than all the Raymond's gold and land. That's what he meant, sure. But I thought it was his love-sick nonsense. Oh, I've read of such things before! Wants to be loved for herself. Oh, I'm done for now! I had the chance of living in that fine house, may be. But I've thrown it away. Oh, I must get it back somehow. Here comes somebody. I'll think more about the way by and by."

Miss Prudence quickly closed the envelope, and soon after opened her window to deliver the mail. After a little while Lilly Hawthorn came. A bright thought came to Miss Prudence—a chance for her to repair the evil she had done.

After giving Lilly the letters and papers—all save one, which she retained for a purpose we shall soon know—Miss Prudence said:

"You have a friend visiting you, Miss Lilly?"

"No, indeed! We have no company. Why did you think so?"

"Why, I surely saw one with you Sunday," said Miss Prudence.

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"That was my dear Miss May. Why, did you not know her?"

"Lands, no! Well, I'll have to own up, and not try to hide my failing sight any more. I must get glasses. Well, I expect her summer clothes must have made her look different. Please explain this to her, Miss Lilly. I have so much respect and regard for Miss May. I would not like her to think me rude," said Miss Prudence, with an air of considerable annoyance.

"Oh, I will explain perfectly, and fix it all right," Lilly said, with a twinkle in her bright eyes.

"Things are working all as we wished," thought she, as she bade good-bye.

An hour after, Charlie came in, and his aunt held out a letter, saying:

"Here is a letter I failed to give Miss Lilly. It may be of great importance. Will you ride over with it? And I say, Charlie, I'll send Jim to get a basket of those pears. You can give them to Miss May from me. They have none like them over there. And give my kind respects, and say *I* sent them."

Charlie gazed with perfect amazement, but thinking it advisable to keep quiet, and do as he was told, started off, feeling happier than for many weeks.

That was only the beginning of Miss Prudence's kind actions. What had caused the change of feeling, neither May nor Charlie could imagine. Miss Prudence kept her own counsel, secretly congratulating herself on the clever way she had managed the awkward affair.

Things progressed so favorably under her management, that in the early fall Charlie won his love.

After the marriage, when the happy couple were receiving the congratulations of their many friends, Gus managed to draw Miss Prudence aside and whisper:

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"Miss Pieper, have you ever heard of the firm of Dunn, Brown & Company?"

That was the signature to the letter that had such a magical effect on Miss Prudence. Her face flushed; but before she could call up an answer, Gus said:

"Ah, I see you have. Well, Gus Hawthorn, Esq., is the principal, in fact, the whole of that institution, which is for the help of those suffering from Cupid's wounds. If you know of any such, who wish the favorable consideration of opposing relatives, send them to me. I can write a letter that will bring round the most decided opposition to a cordial consent, with a blessing in the bargain. Good-day, Miss Pieper. Charlie will not be disappointed, if you should." And with a merry laugh, he joined the company.

A few weeks after, when May and Charlie had returned from their northern trip, Lilly could not help divulging her secret. She said:

"Dear May, once I heard you say, 'only a kind fairy could change Miss Prudence's feelings toward you.' *I* am the fairy!" And then she displayed that magical letter; after which she added: "You cannot chide me, or Gus either, for that bogus fortune secured for you the truest fortune in the world, and one who is more than all the world to you—the true and worthy heart that is now all your own!"

May did not chide. How could she? A loving embrace was her answer to the merry girl. And in time Miss Prudence grew to think, after all, she was glad it was as it was, for May was a great comfort to her in her old age.

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THE COST OF A SHIRT.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

When the street said, "Sin to live!"
And the river said, "Sin to die!"—A. A. Proctor.

"Oh, sir, for mercy's sake, *do* not take off the pay for that shirt! I know it is not quite so nicely done; but it will never be noticed when washed. I had no light; no money to get one. The last candle was dying in the socket, and I could scarcely see by its dim light, when I finished that. Please pay me for all!"

"Impossible. It is our rule to pay for nothing that is not well done. Here is your money!"

"Have you no pity? Oh, what a pittance! This pay—this price for labor that is tearing the life not only from me, but from my little ones, my starving children! Give it to me; my pay, quick! Even now they are crying for bread. Have you children? Then, for *their* sake, have mercy on mine. Listen! *I* was once as well cared for as they. Do you not fear for *their* future? Do not turn away! Hear me. I have a sick babe. She is dying for want of some little mite of nourishment; something more than bread and water! Oh, how she begged for an orange, when I left her! Give me my just due," prayed the woman.

The hard man listened unmoved by the touching appeal. He had failed to notice the entrance of a customer, who

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stood and gazed pityingly on the pleading woman. He had heard most of the conversation.

"Pass on. I never vary from our rule," the employer said, in a hard, cold voice.

The woman, with a look of despair, turned, and was about leaving the store, when the waiting customer came quickly forward, and said:

"Stay, my poor woman! *I* want to talk to you."

Her employer's face expressed unmistakable annoyance. Opening the money-drawer, he took out another pittance, and holding it toward the woman, said:

"Here; take it, and go! I am very busy this morning."

He cast a menacing look on her, and pointed to the door. Then turning to the customer, said, in a bland voice:

"What shall I show you, sir? Oh, excuse me. I remember the shirts you ordered yesterday, and they are ready."

The customer had approached the woman. Placing his hand on her shoulder, he said:

"Stay! I am in no hurry; I wish to talk to you, and I will. I am a plain old countryman; don't know much about town doings. Like to learn a little! Let me see how much money you get for your dozen shirts. It is not idle curiosity. I'll tell you what I was going to pay Mister *there* for *my* dozen: thirty-six dollars. Don't look doubtful; I'm going to be your friend, and I'm thinking now of your suffering children. I'll help them a bit, or my name's not Hiram Washburn!"

The mention of her children brought the woman forward.

Looking toward her employer, she caught again the dark, threatening look.

Again she hesitated—turned as if to leave the store.

Hiram Washburn said:

"Never mind. I see you fear for the loss of future work. I'll fix all that. Look at me. Think you can trust me?"

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"Yes, yes; I see, I know I can!" and she came forward and placed the pay for twelve finely finished shirts in his hand.

Hiram slowly counted it over. A look of real horror came over his honest countenance, then gave place to one of doubt, and he said:

"This is for one, the last he paid you?"

"For *all*—for twelve," was the low answer.

"No, no! Mister, tell me; it is a mistake!"

"That is the highest price paid by any establishment in the city," said the man, angrily.

"Then keep your shirts. *I* will not help to make you rich at the cost of human beings' lives!"

"He tells you true, sir. 'Tis so everywhere. He pays as much as any. You cannot do any better, sir, in buying your goods, than here," said the woman.

"*Here*, in this city—HERE, where on almost every street is a church, where hundreds of people go and hear of charity, justice, humanity, and the repeated command, 'Thou shalt do no murder!' *Here*, you tell me, there are no men of justice! *none* that can and will *live*, and let others *live!* Oh, I *will* not believe it: this *killing* by inches of these poor women!"

And the voice of the man of heart grew tremulous. His eyes were closed tightly a moment, and then again speaking to the woman, he said:

"You shall make no more shirts at that price. What say you to taking your babies into the country, to breathe the fresh air, and get well? Come; my old lady is lonesome, and she was speaking of wanting help, and company too. Jump into my wagon. Tell me where to drive, and soon we will make the children happy! *You* must keep your shirts, Mister, for some one who don't know so much about the *misery* in a shirt. Ugh! I shall never feel comfortably in one again, I think."

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Hiram Washburn seated himself, after having fixed the poor woman comfortably, took up the reins, and then turned and looked earnestly on her.

There was an air of refinement about her, despite her miserable habiliments. Worn by toil, constant confinement, and slow starvation to almost a shadow, it was almost impossible to judge either of her age or natural appearance.

"I can tell better about what she is after my good woman has her a few weeks," thought the good man.

The miserable tenement house was reached—the puny, wilted little ones found. Helping to collect their few articles of clothing, Uncle Hiram—as he bade them call him—placed the two, with the mother, in his wagon, and started—stopping only long enough to get them a lunch, and the sick child the coveted orange. Away from the crowded city, out of the close, fetid atmosphere, into the bright sunshine, breathing the pure air, the soft wind fanning their fevered brows, the children soon felt the reviving influence. The suffering babe began to smile. The mother's heart was filled with gratitude, and again hope began to whisper of life and health.

Uncle Hiram gained from her her name and story. Mary Willard, left an orphan in infancy to the care of relatives not loving and kind, she had been made to feel her loneliness, her dependence. So, when scarcely more than a child, she accepted the love and protection of a worthy but poor man. They lived in moderate comfort, obtained from his employment, until her husband fell in bad health, and finally died, leaving her without any means, and when only twenty, with two babes to provide for. He had been dead three years, during which time she had managed, by selling her furniture and sewing, to sustain life, and scarcely that.

A few hours' drive brought them to their journey's end.

Mrs. Washburn was watching for her husband's return.

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That worthy person, we must admit, felt a *little* uneasy, a little doubtful, about his companion's reception. So, leaving them in the wagon, he went up, and after receiving his usual affectionate greeting, told his story.

"Well, I certainly did mention getting some one to help me; but the way I look at this, you have brought some one for *me* to help. Two babes and their mother! Well, well; God has never given us any of our own, so I suppose He has sent some one else's for us to care for. It is all right, Hiram, if you say so."

And this woman, worthy of the love of such a man as Hiram Washburn, gave the mother and babes a kind welcome—such a one that it put to flight the doubts that had entered the mind of Mary Willard during Uncle Hiram's conversation with his wife.

She felt then sure of having secured not only a refuge from suffering and want, but sympathy and protection from the hard, cruel world.

Mary sought every means of proving her deep gratitude. She soon regained her cheerfulness, and with it came health and strength, which enabled her to make herself a pleasant companion, and a very useful addition to Uncle Hiram's home. Mrs. Washburn often remarked, "It was a lucky day which brought Mary Willard and her little ones to us."

Years rolled on. The sickly babes grew to healthy, merry children, who twined themselves each day closer round the hearts of their kind benefactors.

Days of illness came to the old folks, during which Mary's sweet voice cheered and comforted the long, dreary hours. Her never-tiring hand soothed their sufferings. Truly a blessing she had proved herself. And Uncle Hiram and his wife both said:

"*How* could we do without her?"

Where suffering was, she was ever found. Still quite

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young, and far more beautiful than in the days of her dreary girlhood, she attracted much admiration, and her love was sought by worthy men. But she gave encouragement to none. She should never leave the friends who had saved her. Her duty was there, she always said.

In the immediate neighborhood lived an old man—"crazy," some said. How he subsisted none knew. A miserable object truly—avoided by the people, feared by the children. Old Tim Carnes knew this, and he hated every one for it. He had no friends, and was friend to none, he often said.

Frequently he would go and remain for several days in the city. Returning, bury himself again in his miserable home. After one of these trips the passers-by noticed that his door remained closed, and his only friend and constant companion, an old dog, was whining piteously inside the hut. The second day some of the neighbors broke open the door, and found the old man lying very ill.

At that time the small-pox was prevailing to a considerable extent in the city, causing great terror through the surrounding country.

When the people who had ventured in found "old Tim" sick, they immediately surmised, and afterwards confidently asserted, that he had the much dreaded disease. They hastened not only to leave him, but to get as far as possible from his residence. Old Tim, although ill, was perfectly conscious of the fears and flight of his neighbors. Most likely he might have died from starvation and want of attendance but for Uncle Hiram, who, accompanied by Mary, sought the suffering man. They alone, of all the people near, cared if he lived or died, said old Tim.

They made him as comfortable as possible, and obtained the aid of the nearest physician. The malady proved not to be the dreaded one—and proved too that old Tim had

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friends when he needed them. He knew it then, and felt it.

Mary continued to care for him until he grew well and strong again, and then she would send the children to read to him, and cheer his loneliness.

One more visit the old man made to the city, and on his return brought many things to make his home more comfortable, to receive his few friends. After that, he went no more away. Uncle Hiram always purchased his few wants.

Years continued their flight, until one day the children, as usual, went over and found "old Tim's" spirit had passed from earth.

Among his papers was found the address of a celebrated lawyer in town.

Uncle Hiram immediately conferred with that person, who came and attended to the interment of the old man, and afterwards produced the will of him whom he stated was the possessor of property in the city and bank stock to the amount of a hundred thousand dollars — all bequeathed to Mary Willard; and at the same time recommending her to obtain the services of the lawyer who had so long been his adviser. This gentleman thought it advisable for Mary to spend part of her time in town, for the improvement of her children, and to enjoy her newly acquired means. So, during the winters, Uncle Hiram and his wife went with her, and in the summer she and the children returned with them.

Back to the place of her former misery, Mary Willard's thoughts reverted to the old tenement house; and with Uncle Hiram she started one day to find it.

Yes, there it stood, as ten years before—a little more miserable looking perhaps.

She longed to go in and find the little room where those hours of toil and suffering were spent.

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Perhaps she could do some good by going in—yes, she might relieve some little children, or a starving mother.

She mounted the old stairs so well remembered. How often she had toiled up when weary, and hungry, to reach her room, and to find neither rest, nor food enough to satisfy her—only to labor on for life!

The little room was gained. She knocked lightly on the door.

"Come in," said a girlish voice. She entered. Bending over a piece of work, her cheeks flushed with fever, sat a little maid, who quickly arose and placed chairs for her visitors.

Mary inquired if she would do some sewing for her. The girl, scarce more than a child, told of working for a large establishment: and fearing to give up that for temporary work. And when, in reply to Mary's inquiry of the amount she could realize, she told the pittance, a groan escaped her listener's lips. "Worse—yes, even worse than in my days of misery!" she said to Uncle Hiram.

"Finish that piece of work, child; but no more at that price. I will give you work enough. Here, I will engage you immediately. This gentleman wishes a dozen shirts made. There is the price. We will call to-morrow with the materials; or could you not come and make them at our house? It will do you good, the change."

The child looked at the money, counted fifteen dollars, and exclaimed:

"You do not know what you have given me, lady, surely. Oh, do not tempt me! 'Tis so hard to be honest!"

Mary Willard told the child in a few words of her own struggles in the past. And when, urging her to return with them to work, she told of her sick father, then lying in the next room; and then the poor girl burst into tears, and said:

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"We were wealthy once. Papa had a large establishment. But all is gone now. We managed to live rather better than this until papa got sick."

Uncle Hiram asked to go in and see the sick man. The child led him in.

In a few moments he came out, and called Mary, saying:

"I want you to come in, and tell me if I am not right. This sick man is an old acquaintance, I think. How *wonderful* are the workings of Providence!"

Mary entered, approached the bed, looked earnestly a few moments, and then said:

"Yes, you are right. 'Tis George Harden, my employer in those days of toil."

She told him who she was in those old days, and who she was then—of her object in coming there—her wishes to help his child!

"*You* have some idea of the miserable pay for labor *now*," Uncle Hiram could not refrain from saying.

But Mary gave him an appealing look, and seated herself by the sick man. She, by her gentle, winning manner, drew from him the cause of his present poverty.

He, among the many, had failed in the crash of fifty-seven. *His troubles*, like *her blessings*, had not come singly. Soon after his failure his wife died. And he sought to drown his trouble by drinking. He lost one after another means of employment, until everything was gone. Then illness came, and his only child was wearing her life out toiling for him. In conclusion, he said:

"Do you believe your words to me *that day* have often returned to my mind? You said, 'Did I not fear the future for my children?' Oh, if those days could come back I would do so different. Yes, yes, *I* do know now *how much misery* there is in a shirt."

"*Would* you do different? Then arouse yourself.

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Give up drinking. Prove to us that you are able to attend to business again, and you shall, for your child's sake, for the sake of the many we can help, the example we can set, you shall have the means of repairing the past by future justice," said Mary.

Care and proper nourishment soon restored George Harden to health. His child went to live with Mary Willard.

In a few months Uncle Hiram signified his opinion that "they could trust Harden with business again."

He is doing now all his benefactors could wish him. And in that large city there is one establishment where the employers are willing to do *justice!*

Will not others think for a moment, and do likewise; remembering their day of need may come?

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CAROL'S FORGIVENESS.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Man's forgiveness may be true and sweet,
But yet he stoops to give it. More complete
Is love that lays forgiveness at thy feet,
And sues with thee to take it.—A. A. Proctor.

"One more song, Carol, darling! A parting song, that shall fill my heart with music that must endure for two years —two long, long years! No others' tones will touch an answering chord in my soul, and I feel almost selfish enough to wish yours should not fall on other ears when I am gone. But this you must promise: this song you will not sing again to any one. It shall be kept sacred to the memory of this hour."

"I will promise, Edgar. Neither this nor the 'Welcome Greeting' will I sing again, until to you," answered Caroline. Then turning to the piano, she began her song. Never had she sung so well. Her soul was in her tones; and when she ceased and turned to her lover, he exclaimed:

"Beautiful! beautiful! Do you know, my carolling darling, that you have a fortune of surer possession in your voice than all your father's wealth? But come! bid me good-bye with smiles, not tears. The time of my going is very near. I must hasten."

She put forth her hand; he caught it, and drew her to his bosom. As he released her, a bracelet caught on his

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button and broke. The little charms—Cross, Heart, and Anchor—that were attached to it, separated; the cross still hanging to the button, the others falling at Caroline's feet.

With a frightened look she pointed to the broken trinket, and said:

"Oh, Edgar! this is an omen of coming evil, I know. Your gift thus broken, and at such a time!"

"Nonsense! At your feet, behold my heart and hope. And on my bosom lies our faith. Here, put a piece of ribbon or something in this little cross, and I will wear it until we meet again."

"When shall that be?" asked Caroline in such a mournful voice, that Edgar said:

"Still superstitious?"

"I feel a presentiment, Edgar, that years will pass before we meet again, if ever. But here, take this cross; I will have faith. See, I have wrapped around it a piece of my hair! Now, whatever the future may bring, and wherever you may be, send this to me, and I will come!" Caroline said, her voice full of mournful tenderness.

"Oh, Carol, pray do not talk so! You impress me with your gloom. Come, cheer up, and own up too, that you are afraid to trust me in the constant society of Miss Erving; but you need have no fears about her. Even though I should think of her, she would not be apt to encourage her father's secretary, when she can aspire to the highest position in our land."

A look of reproach was Caroline's reply to Edgar's words. And when he again pressed her to his heart in his final farewell, and left her, she felt then as if it was for ever.

Before two years had passed, there came a great financial crisis, in which many of the wealthiest fell — Caroline Ainsworth's father among the first. When poverty was threatening, not for herself did she tremble, but for those

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dear ones, then aged, and illy able to bear either the shock or its results. Then Edgar's words came back to her. She had a fortune in her voice. Cheerfully, hopefully she went to work. And then how eagerly she watched for the coming of Edgar's letter of sympathy, encouragement—aye, that most of all, which should sustain her, his words of love. The letter came. Oh, the cold, cruel letter, which for a time swept faith, hope, and almost reason from her mind and heart.

A little while only, and then she arose above the sorrow man had caused, and bravely went to work. Calmly she re-read his letter, asking to be released from his vows. Business still retaining him in Europe, he should not return to the States at present; and as, of course, her plans for the future would engross her completely, she would agree with him it would be better, and no doubt also agreeable to her, to be free.

"You are free," were the only words Caroline wrote in reply. A year spent in study and winning encouragement from the best masters, and then to try her power. Success followed, and fame crowned her with laurels.

Europe and America acknowledged her the prima donna of the age. Teach her to love, and then hers will be music divine. Power, passion, pathos—she has all; but they had been acquired from great masters. The wanting power must be of herself, from her own soul," said the old connoisseurs.

Seven years had winged their flight since she had parted from Edgar Roseveldt. She had heard nothing of him since about six months after her receipt of his letter. Then she was told he was coming home to marry Miss Erving.

After a night of even more than usual eclat, she sat the next day surrounded with the tokens of her listeners' appreciation. Flowers rare and beautiful, jewels costly and

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antique, all around her. She pushed them impatiently aside, and her head sank into her hands. Her thoughts flew back to the time when she sang simple ballads, and watched for the words and look of admiration from *one* with more eagerness, and hailed its coming with more real gratification than ever since she had from the crowned heads and nobles of the land.

"How near I was last night to singing the 'Welcome Greeting!' I could with difficulty restrain myself. My heart seemed filled with that. I have not thought of it since that night. I think, if I had sung it, there might have been found the wanting tone. They say I am cold—there is no love in my voice. Cold! Oh, can they not think there is a coldness more icy than that of unknown love? 'Tis when love has been given birth, known life, and then been killed, that it becomes so icy cold!" Thus Caroline Ainsworth communed with herself.

Going to a jewel casket she unlocked it, and drew forth the little golden heart and anchor.

"Strange! strange that I should have felt the coming of his perfidy! I *knew* that night it would be so. I wonder where the little companion of these is?" she murmured. "What do I care for this life of continual excitement: this admiration of the millions? Nothing—nothing. All, all are gone now for whom I cared to be great. Edgar worse than dead. Would that I could think of him watching and waiting for my coming, in the land where angels sing! Father gone! mother gone! I care for the praise of no one now! I sing to no one now! Oh, weary, weary life! I have only one joy—the remembrance of the comfort I gave them."

A knock on the door announced the coming of some one, and in answer to her permission to "come in," a waiter presented himself, and said, handing an envelope, "Mademoiselle, the bearer is waiting."

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"Oh, I am tired of these baubles!" she said, as she pressed in her fingers the envelope, which contained an offering of some kind, she knew. The pressure made the impression not of a ring, on the paper in which it was enclosed, but a *cross*. As Caroline's eye detected that, she opened, with an appearance of more interest, the sealed paper, and the little golden cross, wrapped with her own hair, was in her hand!

"Your promise! Do you remember? The messenger will direct you," was written tremulously and irregularly, but she knew *his* hand had penned the lines.

"Bring the bearer to me immediately, Jean, and order my carriage. I shall be ready to use it in fifteen minutes."

"Tell me, my good woman. The gentleman—is he ill?"

The woman could understand but little English, and Caroline, repeating her inquiry in French, learned that the woman had been sent by a gentleman who was ill, perhaps dying. Bidding the woman come with her, and direct the driver, Caroline entered her carriage. After a half-hour's drive, the carriage stopped before a lodging house in the Rue de Rivoli. The woman preceded Caroline in, and up long flights of stairs until they reached a door; opening which cautiously, she stepped in an instant. Returning, she whispered, "Come in!"

He was sleeping—the miserable wreck of the once handsome Edgar Roseveldt. As Caroline bent over his wasted form, a great terror filled her heart—she had come too late. "Dead?" she groaned forth, looking from the pale features to the attendant, who answered, "No, no! sleeping!"

Bending over, gazing on the form of him once so proud and noble looking, then so worn, so wretched, Caroline's heart filled with pity. All the cruel past was forgiven. How could she feel resentment toward him lying so stricken before her?

The eagerness of her watching, the intense gaze, must

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have aroused the sleeper. He slowly opened his eyes and met hers.

"Ever true," he murmured—"to your promise," he added, in a voice so low Caroline had to stoop very near to catch his words.

The effect of speaking seemed to exhaust him. Looking into his eyes, still so beautifully bright, raised to hers with a look so eager, so appealing, Caroline's own grew dim, and tears fell unrestrained on the wasted hand clasped in hers.

The woman drew near, and holding to him a glass of wine, said that it would make him stronger.

Caroline gently raised his head as the woman held it to his lips. Such a grateful look met her eye! She thought, "Oh, why is he here alone? Where is she whose gentle hand should minister here?"

He had gained some little strength, and when she drew near and seated herself, he said:

"I would not have sent for you if I had been equal with you in any way; but now, when you are so far above me, you can stoop at least to pity. I am dying, you see. I could not resist the constant longing to see you once more —once more to hear your voice. Can you forget the past long enough to sing me one song?"

She said, "You must feel I do forgive, and will forget all that you would fain have me." She sang the song that had trembled on her lips the night before, and filled her heart ever since; then burst forth the "Welcome Greeting."

A smile, wan but very sweet, came over his pale face, and rested there until she had finished her song. He seemed to grow much stronger, and inclined to talk. Seeing this, Caroline said:

"How is it you are here alone, in Paris? Where are your friends? your—" wife she would have said, but the word died on her lips. She could not utter *that*, and continued, "Tell me something of yourself."

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"I will—all," he answered. "When I wrote you that cruel letter—"

"Hush!" Caroline said. "I would only hear of your later life."

"I must," he answered. "I must. Then, for a period I was possessed of a spirit of evil. I was flattered by the kindness of Miss Erving. I believed I could win her; and with her, wealth and high position. I thought I did, or could love her, and forget you. But I soon knew I could not, and would have given everything I possessed to have been able to recall that letter. I almost made up my mind to write again, and sue for what I had resigned. When your reply came, then I determined to return home and seek you, and try to gain forgiveness, and a return of confidence. On my arrival, you had left; and after, when success and fame came so quickly to you, I dared not seek you. Resigning my position as Mr. Erving's secretary, I engaged in business with one I had always believed my friend, and an honest man. I trusted everything to him. My heart was not in my work. I was dissatisfied with myself, and everything I engaged in was doomed to failure. My partner robbed me, and finally went off with all the money he could obtain. With the little left, a few hundred dollars, I followed him here. Many weeks ago I was seized with a fever, from which I have never recovered; and now I have but little hope I ever shall. But for this kind woman, I should have suffered much. Last night I thought I was dying, or I should not have sent for you this morning."

He ceased, tired and fainting almost, from the exertion of so much speaking. Again the kind attendant came with the wine; and after it had been administered, Caroline motioned the woman into the adjoining room, and questioning her closely, learned that he was entirely without money. The

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little he had was soon consumed in obtaining the most necessary medicines and wine. Returning to the bedside, she stood, her heart overflowing with joy. She knew then *her* place had never been given to another.

Could the admiring hundreds who gazed on her the night before have seen her *then*, they would have found all that they had thought wanting. The look, the tone, the feeling that so many had sought in vain, was there. She bent over and whispered to the sufferer:

"Edgar, you will live!"

A new light flashed in his eye, and gazing eagerly into her's, he whispered:

"Live! for what?"

"Look into my eyes, Edgar, and see!" she murmured, a beautiful flush tinging her fair face.

He could not mistake, for plainly her eyes answered his cry. "Live for love and me!" they said.

"No, no; you cannot mean it! You, so high; and I, so crushed! You shall not stoop so low, my queen. Even in my dreams I am not so wild—"

"Edgar, I only stoop to lay my heart for you to raise to light and life. Look back. See me not as the multitude, their favorite for the time; see only the simple, loving girl of the past. Know not the prima donna. Know alone the trusting woman, who willingly will resign the admiration of the world for the love and appreciation of one true heart."

Thus she came down from the height of her greatness to the true, loving woman.

When next she sang, all hearers acknowledged the newly gained power. There was no longer a wanting tone. A few weeks after, all Paris was surprised, and many of her noble sons indignant, that their "Queen of Song" should have wedded a man entirely unknown to the world. But what cared she? He was more than all the world to her.

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WARNED BY A DREAM.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"For mercy's sake, stop some of this noise! What a perfect bedlam! All going at once! I can neither read, write, nor think! These three make as much noise as thirty well-behaved children would at their merriest times!" exclaimed George Thornton, around whom clustered his little ones, "all speaking at once," as he had said.

George Thornton had just thrown himself into the arm chair in the sitting room. He had had a hard day's work, and was tired and not in the best possible humor.

His oldest, Master George had mounted the chair, while Rosie, the next one—was caressing his hand. And baby had crawled to and was trying to raise up by his "papa's" knees. George cried out, "Papa, won't you buy me a rod and line, and lots of fish hooks? Jimmie Parsons has got splendid ones—and I must have them, too. Mayn't I?"

"No, no, papa, boys tan wait. Dive me a *big*, little boy—doll baby—like Katy Mason's, *first?*" lisped Rosie. And baby shouted and crowed, as if he was espousing Rosie's cause.

"Take them off! Away! before I go mad! Mary, *will* you let me have a few moments of peace and quiet! Or must I go out of my own house to find it?" exclaimed George.

"Come in the parlor, or up stairs, George, and let them be

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merry while they can; I cannot bear to check their sport. And they are so glad to see you, after your absence all day; that is why they go on so," said the mother, in a deprecating tone.

"No; I prefer to remain here in the sitting-room. I do not intend to be turned out to indulge them in their rudeness."

A reproachful look from his wife did not serve to make George feel any more pleasant. And, throwing himself into a chair, he drew out a paper, and tried to read.

"Come, George, get your tea first. I've something you like. Come. I received your note telling me you would not be home to dinner, and so I have fixed you such a nice little supper. Come now, before it gets cold."

While enjoying the delicate cream biscuits that Mary had made herself, because she knew George liked them best when she made them, the chicken, broiled so crisp and brown, with a generous supply of currant jelly, George grew more pleasant; and, to account for his absence all day and his unusual ill-humor, he told of the great pressure of business, and numerous annoyances and interruptions.

Just then a peal of laughter reached George's ears, notwithstanding the closed doors, and Master George junior's shouts were plainly distinguished above the others.

"That boy is too noisy, and makes the others so wild and rude. I *have* seen children who could behave themselves. You really must manage to keep them quiet somehow, Mary."

"O George, they cannot help it, they are so full of life and fun, and I cannot bear to quiet their merry voices. Ah, the cares and sorrows of this world will do that too soon!"

"I declare, Mary, you take everything so seriously. I only want them to keep quiet when I am about. Why, last

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summer, when you were in the country, I would not have known there was a child in Moreton's house, the two months I boarded there. I never heard his boy shout, or laugh and scream, as ours. He is the best child I ever saw!"

"George, would you wish our boy like poor Willie Moreton?"

"Well, no—not exactly! I should not like him in such poor health."

"That is why the poor boy is so quiet. He is grieving too, constantly, for the little sisters that have been hushed to sleep!"

"How? I have forgotten."

"George, the scarlet-fever left Willie as he is now, and deprived him also of his little sisters' love and company!"

And the mother's face grew pale as she breathed that dreadful name, which strikes terror to so many mothers' hearts.

A few moments after, George returned with Mary to the sitting-room. For a while the children were kept in a measure quiet—baby put to sleep, and Georgie and Rosie diverted from teasing the cat, which occasioned the great noise heard by the parents while in the supper-room.

After a while a perfect calm was obtained, and George was puffing at his meerschaum, and feeling quite comfortable. The quiet was ominous. They might have *known* it. It would have been utterly impossible for Georgie to have remained so still five minutes, unless he was plotting some new mischief.

Mary, taking advantage of the quiet, slipped away to put her youngest to bed. Scarcely had the door closed after her, when Georgie stole round to his mother's work-basket, and began pulling over the contents for something that was soon found. Then taking up his slate and pencil, he seated himself on the carpet, near his father, and began to amuse himself, but not just in the way that we might think.

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Fifteen minutes elapsed, when the father was aroused by Georgie's crying out:

"Look! look, papa! Rosie is marking all over your new book!"

Glancing quickly up, sure enough her father beheld Rosie, with a lead pencil, scribbling over the leaves of a beautifully illustrated volume of poems, from which he had been reading to Mary the evening before, and neglected to put it up again in the bookcase.

George sprang, or rather *attempted* to spring forward, to take the book from Rosie; but his progress was very much impeded by the chair, which clung so closely to him that he found it quite impossible to get from it.

Just then Georgie broke out in a peal of laughter, huzzas and shouts: and his father, on examining his situation, found his coat fastened to the chair with at least a dozen large pins.

Rosie stopped her marking and joined in the laughter, and notwithstanding their father's demand to be released, the little ones continued to enjoy their fun, and called for mamma to "come see!"

The noise soon brought Mary down; and seeing the cause of their merriment, she could not resist a smile, which endeavoring to conceal, she began removing the pins, and at the same time scolding Georgie—the latter seeming not to make the little teaze feel in any way disconcerted.

George was angry—not so much about the boy's fun, as Rosie's mischievous and destructive propensity.

"*Something* must be done with these children! I will not stand them any longer! They are the torments of a man's life!"

George then threw himself on the sofa, and feeling safe there while Mary was near to watch the little torments, he again took up his book.

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Soon after, the children were taken up to bed, and George's mind wandered from his reading, and became filled with the thoughts of his children, and their mother's forbearance with their faults, which should be immediately corrected, he thought. He would take them in hand himself, the next day. Yes, when he returned from the store in the evening, he would see if he could not have a change.

The next evening, at an earlier hour than usual, he returned, expecting to find the young ones in some romping game, and to hear their shouts a half square from the house.

But no; all was quiet, perfectly quiet. He passed from the hall to the sitting-room; still no sound of the children; then to the dining-room, the kitchen, out in the yard. Where could they be?

Up stairs then he started, and met Nora, the cook, coming so quietly down. And she spoke in such a low, frightened voice:

"It's for the medicine I've bin."

"Medicine? For whom?" he asked anxiously

"Rosie."

"Mary's soft voice, from the upper flight, said:

"Rosie is very sick. We have gotten her to sleep, and Georgie and baby are in the back building. I want to keep everything quiet."

Yes, yes; all was more quiet then than he wished. Rosie was ill—dreadfully ill. And then the doctor told the cause—that terrible fever!

"Papa! papa! come to Rosie. Rosie will never worry papa any more—no more! Please come, papa; Rosie is so sorry about the pretty book! Never mark no more—no, never; 'deed Rosie won't!"

Thus the little one's cries would fill his ears, and almost break the father's heart. One night, when the poor mother,

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worn out with watching and anxiety, was borne fainting from the room, George took her place beside his child.

She must die, he knew too well. All knew her merry voice would no more fill the house with sounds that he would then think the sweetest music in the world. And he had wished her kept quiet—put to sleep. Aye, the sleep was near at hand.

"Papa!" she called. "Papa! are you mad with Rosie? Please say 'No!' Rosie's doing to be dood, papa; and *so* still, now. So sleepy, too. Call mamma to say, 'Our Father.' No, no; mamma too tired. Papa know 'Our Father'? Say it?"

George knelt, and in broken tones, or sobs, did as she begged him. Her sweet voice had grown weaker. Scarce could her last words, "Make friends, papa! kiss Rosie!" be understood.

And with a smile wreathing the lips she tried to press to his, little Rosie was hushed to sleep.

From the side of the little blossom which had ceased to bloom on earth, George followed the doctor to Georgie's couch, smitten alike by that fearful fever.

Long days he lingered, drifting between life and death; and to which would his little spirit yield, none could tell.

"Spare him! O heavenly Father, spare him!" the father prayed, oh, so earnestly!

While still pleading on his knees that his first-born might be spared him, the feeble voice whispered, "Papa!"

George sprang to his side. Many hours had passed since a word intelligible had those pale lips uttered.

"Papa, I'll try to be still and good—not worry you—"

"Oh, my boy, papa only wants you to get well, and you can never worry him any more."

"Papa, it is so dark! Light the lamp, and then I want something to eat. I'm hungry."

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And then the terrible truth came like a thunderbolt to the agonized father. His boy would live, but no longer to *see* the faces of those who so loved him—blind, blind to all that had been so dear and beautiful to that merry little heart.

Yes, Georgie slowly recovered from his illness, and his father's hours of leisure were spent in endeavoring to amuse and comfort his boy. There was a chance of his eyesight returning, the doctor said; but he would never be strong and well again.

George Thornton's heart was blighted! What hopes had filled it for his boy's future! Now all were crushed. And Georgie was so quiet now. Oh for one of his old merry shouts again, to ring through those dismal rooms!

So intent in his anxiety and care for Georgie, he knew not that the baby was near so ill. All had thought their youngest darling was doing well, when a sudden fearful change came over him, and by his tiny form the father knelt and watched. He saw the doctor come, look anxiously into the baby's face, and then turn sorrowfully away, with a countenance that spoke so plainly the words which faltered on the lips of the kind-hearted man:

"Him, too, you must give up."

"My God, have mercy! This is more than I can bear!" cried out the tortured man. And he sprang up and gazed wildly on Mary, who stood by him, and with a frightened look, asked:

"Why, George, what is the matter? You have had a bad dream—"

"*Dream*, Mary! dream! *Is* it a dream? Where is Rosie, Georgie, the baby?"

"All up-stairs, sleeping sweetly."

"Thank God! Yes, I've had a terrible dream. Come, let us go up to our treasures," said George, who still felt as

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if he would like to *see* that his little ones were all well and still with them.

"You must have fallen asleep very soon after I went out," said Mary.

"I have lived weeks of agony since then."

Yes, that dream had been so terribly vivid, that when George was beside little Georgie's bed, he could not resist waking him up.

"Here are your hooks, my son, and a line too. Can you see them?" asked his father, the terrible dream still impressing his mind.

"*See* them? Indeed I can! An't they bully? Thank you, papa. I'll try to be good and quiet after this."

"Never mind, Georgie, about being very quiet; only try to be a good boy, and you may sing and shout as much as you choose."

"All right, papa. You know how to fix it. For if I am good, I will not want to be noisy when you wish me to be quiet."

From that night, there was a marked and happy change in George Thornton. He knows now how blessed he is in having merry, laughter-loving, fun-making children. And whenever he hears his friends complaining about the noise of their children, he tells them that, to him, there are no sounds so pleasing. Hush them not. Let them be merry while they can. They may not long remain. He who gave them may soon hush them to sleep, and still for ever their merry, laughing tones!

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WILLARD GRAYSON'S REVENGE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Lift thy head—look below;
'Tis my life at thy feet I throw,
To step on into life and joy!"

"You will introduce me, will you not, Grayson?"

"I don't know about that. I hardly think it quite safe. When a very plain looking fellow, like myself, is pretty confident that he is in a fair way to win the heart of a lovely girl, I don't think he would be a bit smart to throw in her way a handsome, accomplished, dashing young gent, like you, Herbert."

"Nonsense, man. Not much danger of cutting you out—that is, if the young lady knows your worth as well as I. Are you engaged? Come, own up!"

"Thank you, Herbert, for your good opinion. I am not engaged. I would not try to be until I had spoken to Miss Wordsworth's father, and I shall not do so until I can assure him of my capability of supporting his child as she should be. But I hope soon to be able to do that. My business is very prosperous now. Yes, I will introduce you, Herbert, because, when you know Louise, you will want to come and spend your evenings with us, instead of at the club-room and public places; knowing her will do you good, make you a better man; it has me. I will call for you this evening."

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"Thank you, Grayson; I shall be delighted. She is very beautiful, is she not? I have heard so. What is her style?"

"Beautiful to me, certainly! She is all the world to me —mother, sister, friend; and dearer still than all those. You know I'm alone in the world, and so my love is not divided."

Herbert was disappointed when he saw Louise, and found her not a beauty—but a sweet, lovable girl, he must admit. "But Willard need not feel a bit uneasy. My heart will not yield in that quarter," he said to himself after he left Miss Wordsworth.

"How do you like my friend, Louise?" asked Willard Grayson.

"How do I like him? As your friend," answered Louise.

"But for nothing else? He is very handsome, agreeable, and sings finely," continued Willard.

"True; but— Well, I will tell you. He has been told these things. He knows it too well, and that's why I do not fancy him. Now, is he not just a wee bit conceited?"

"Well, the girls have spoiled him. But he is a stranger here. You will be kind to him, Louise? I want to keep him out of wild company. He is fond of music, and if you will sing with him he will be delighted to come here, and not go elsewhere," said Willard, who forgot his own fears in anxiety for his friend's welfare.

And so time passed on, and Louise began to grow very tolerant with regard to Herbert's conceitedness, and always welcomed his coming. His voice accorded so finely with hers. He was so full of fun and wit. And Herbert cared not to go elsewhere, as the noble, generous Willard had hoped.

Those were such happy evenings spent there. Never had Herbert Courtland known such before. And he wondered

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that he had ever enjoyed the club-room gatherings. And how beautiful Louise really was! He must have been blind not to see it at first. How she had won upon him! What a lucky fellow Willard was to have secured her love! These were the thoughts that filled Herbert Courtland's mind, after he had known Louise a few months.

Unsuspecting, Willard loved on, worked on for that love till the time came when he could with confidence ask the father for his child.

"Louise, darling! I am going to speak to your father to-night, and then you will make me happy? I may soon have you in my own home, may I not?"

Trembling, she whispered, "I will tell you to-morrow!"

The father's cordial consent was given for Willard to win his daughter. And with a heart overflowing with joy and thankfulness, he hastened to find Louise, and hear those blessed words he hoped and thought she would speak to him.

With a pale face and sorrowful, the father met and drew him into the library.

"Louise ill? What is it? Speak!"

"Worse, worse than that—gone!"

"Gone! Dead!" asked Willard, in an agony of fear and suspense.

"No, no, not dead—yes, dead to *you*, my boy! She eloped this morning, and married your friend, Herbert Courtland! Bear it bravely, Willard; although, my child, I must say she is unworthy of such love as yours."

As Mr. Wordsworth's words clearly forced the terrible truth on Willard Grayson's mind, he grasped the nearest chair for support. No word escaped his lips, yet plainly the father saw his child's perfidy had dealt a fearful blow—aye, crushed not only hope but life from out the heart which, only a few brief moments before, was so joyous, so confident of success.

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"'Tis a bitter blow, but it will not kill; I have something still to live for."

"That is right, my boy; that is the way to take it!" said Mr. Wordsworth, who did not dream the intent of Willard's words, who then grasped his friend's hand, and left the house.

No longer his eyes were bright with love and hope. Plainly the portals showed the light burned within no more. Suddenly it had been extinguished, leaving only the dreary, hopeless darkness.

"Revenge! revenge! For that I will live! Aye, Louise, with your latest breath you shall remember me!" he bitterly murmured.

Once only he saw her after her return, and then she turned and fled; either frightened by his altered mien, or fearing his reproaches, she hardly knew which herself; only she dared not meet one she felt she had so cruelly wronged.

Many times Herbert Courtland turned a corner of the street, or quickly entered a store, to avoid his former friend. But on one occasion never forgotten, either the time or the words, by Herbert, Willard came suddenly upon him, and when he was about to pass with a hasty bow:

"Stop!" uttered in a stern, commanding voice, forced him to do so.

In a hesitating, wavering manner, Herbert extended his hand, saying:

"Will you take my hand, Willard?"

"No; I would sooner clasp that of an assassin, for such you have been to me. I trusted you, and you slew me with a blow more deadly than an enemy's weapon could deal. The one would be instant and over; yours is still here, and will remain until it is dealt back, aye, and doubly paid for. The time will yet come when Louise Wordsworth will think of me with a different feeling than pity. Yes, to her latest breath she shall remember Willard Grayson!"

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"God knows I struggled against it; but—"

Willard Grayson, heeding not his words, turned and left him.

Weeks and months passed by until years had rolled over. Herbert and Louise Courtland's wedded life was one of not unalloyed happiness, for a constant dread filled the hearts of both.

Herbert could not banish from his mind Willard's words and manner, when they last met. He felt perfectly sure, in some way he would make them feel keenly the wrong they had dealt him.

Why years had passed, and still Willard remained inactive, they could not assign a reason. Was it that he was waiting a surer, a more perfect revenge to gain? Or was it that the noble character of the injured man proved firm against the whispering of the evil spirit that at times almost gained the ascendency? They could not tell.

And Willard Grayson scarce knew himself why he lived on, and sought not that for which he vowed to live.

Was it that the love, betrayed, outraged, and cast aside, had not been cast out by him? Did it still live in his heart, and with its holy influence was pleading so earnestly for mercy and forgiveness? How could he slay him, except by wounding her? Did the remembrance of what she had once been to him stay the avenging hand?

These thoughts would come to Willard, and starting up, he would try to throw off the better mood, and murmur, as if to excuse his tardiness of action:

"No, no! 'Tis not so. 'Tis for a surer, more perfect blow."

That Willard lived at all seemed strange to all his friends. Not only had his hopes been blighted, but health and strength sunk under the same cruel blow, until only the shadow of his former self remained.

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Four years had gone by, and never had Willard Grayson met Louise save that one time.

Frailer wore the thread which held him to earth, and Willard felt sure it must soon give way, and then an intense longing possessed his soul once more to see Louise.

It was a wild night. The wind swept madly through the streets of that great city, shrieking, moaning, and sighing. But above those dismal sounds arose another, a cry that struck terror to the hearts of all:

"Fire! Fire! Fire!"

The —— Hotel was in flames, while scores of the inmates were still wrapped in slumber. The street was soon blocked by the engines, and vigorously the brave men went to their noble work. A storm of water was cast on the building, yet the terrible flames were subdued only for the moment, to burst forth again with a renewed power of defiance, until no longer a hope for saving the building existed. Wildly rushed forth terrified men, women, and children, until all were believed out. Then, above all other cries, came one that went home to every parent heart:

"My boy! Oh, God! my boy! Save my boy!" and a woman, young and beautiful, rushed toward the burning building.

Kind hands drew her back; and the father, who, in the wild excitement and terror of the scene, had clasped in his arm and saved the child of another, then rushed forward to bring forth his own, or perish with him. But he too was drawn back. And the words, "You are now exhausted. It would be useless, fatal to both!" sounded in his ear.

Already ascending the ladder, cheered on by the admiring crowd below, was seen a young man. Slowly curled forth the clouds of smoke from the window that he had reached, and the cries were hushed, awed into profound silence, as the brave man disappeared from their sight. Darker,

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denser came forth the smoke, and in its clouds the welcomed form! Clasped closely in his arm, the boy! Another step, and he had gained the ladder! and then a wild triumphant cry burst upon the air. As he descended the ladder, an immense volume of flame rushed after him, as if determined to overtake and envelop the noble man. But he is beyond its reach. Many arms were put forth to clasp the child, with the words:

"You are ill, fainting. Give him to us?"

But he waved them off, and staggered on, to find the mother. "Take him, take the child! The man is falling!" But he heeded not their words, but clasped closer his precious burden, and gained the mother's side.

"Thank God! and you!" burst from her grateful heart, and pillowing on her bosom her boy, turned to his deliverer.

"Louise, I give him to you! Bless—forgive—remember — you'll remember me, Louise!" And catching the hand that was put forth, he pressed it to his lips, and sank at the feet of the woman he had so madly loved.

Gentle hands ministered to him, but it was of no avail. The frail thread had broken, the saddened life was ended, and Willard Grayson's weary soul was resting.

The great desire of his soul had been granted him. He had seen her, pressed her hand, and willingly he yielded up his life, and hailed it a blessed boon that his latest breath had been for her and near her.

The aim for which he had lived had been gained—a revenge! one noble and perfect. Prophetic were the words, "Louise shall remember me to her latest breath."

Truly so it was, with a profound gratitude, and deep sorrow that she had wronged so noble a heart.

She feels he forgave them, Herbert and herself, and some time they shall meet again—that he is waiting for her in a land where disappointment is never known; where regrets cease, and love dwelleth for ever!

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REMOVING THE MASK.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"You are quite sure you love her, my boy?"

"Love her? Why, uncle, I adore her! How could I help it, seeing her every evening for three months past, and listening to her sweet voice? If you knew her, uncle, you would not ask such a question. To know her is to love her, my beautiful, charming Isabel!"

"Are you perfectly certain you know her, Frank?" asked Uncle Phil., with a comical smile.

"Have I not told you, uncle, that every evening for nearly three months past has been spent with her?"

"Yes, that may be, and still you not know her. Whenever you have been with her, she has been expecting you, or some other young fellow that she intended to charm. So you are acquainted with the belle and beauty Miss Isabel Courtney; but, my boy, have you ever gone in on her during the day, when she was not prepared for callers?"

"No, sir, I have not—"

"Never mind. Wait until I finish, then you can go on with your rhapsodies. Well, Frank, you'll never know her until you see her only with her home folks. See and know the *daughter* and *sister*, and then tell me you know Isabel Courtney the *woman;* and if still you are as much in love and determined to marry her, I will have to yield. You have not committed yourself?"

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"No, uncle; although hundreds of times I have been on the eve of throwing myself at her feet, and declaring my love. My promise given you never to marry without consulting you, has restrained me. But really, uncle, I think you are rather too particular. I imagine it is this that has kept you single all this time. You have never been able to find perfection, or any woman coming up to your standard of what a woman should be."

"No, my boy, you are mistaken. I've known many very lovely women, fully up to my ideal. But, Frank, the memory of one in Heaven, the first, the last, the only loved, is dearer to me than any living woman can ever be; and looking forward to a union with her in the world beyond, I am waiting our Father's call to find her," answered Uncle Phil., his voice grown softer and sinking lower.

Frank, ever impulsive, started up, clasped his uncle's hand, and exclaimed:

"Forgive me, uncle, if I have wounded you."

"No, my boy, you have not. Now to return to the subject so important to you. I am glad you have not told Miss Courtney of your affection, or rather of your temporary infatuation."

A frown darkened Frank's handsome face, and he turned impatiently away.

"Ah, now it's my turn to say 'forgive me.' But really, Frank, if you will reflect—let your mind go back only six months—you will admit I have good reason for speaking as I do. Remember Mary Fulton. Every evening found you beside her. Dear little girl! I was making myself quite happy with the hope of ending my days with her as your wife, Frank. You were loud in your praises of her until you met Miss Courtney."

"Yes, uncle, I know it. I did, and do still think Mary a very lovable little girl; but—"

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"Well, boy, out with it. But what?"

"Well, uncle, Mary is pretty, gentle, sweet-tempered, and no doubt would make a good wife. But—ah!—"

"Ah, my boy, I see you are a little ashamed to tell your objections."

"No, sir, not at all. You must readily agree with me that Mary is not the wife for a man in such a position as I hold. I'm expected to entertain a great deal of company and am thrown much into fashionable society. Now Mary is such a homespun little thing, so very domestic. I want a woman with grace, dignity and ease, to preside at my entertainments—one I shall be proud of. Now, uncle, you have the whole truth."

"And so my dear little Mary, with her artlessness, natural grace, and acquirements which should be considered accomplishments, is cast aside for a fashionable butterfly! Ah, Frank, I fear you are not likely to secure happiness by this decision."

"Uncle, I never once, during the month I visited Mary, said one word of love to her."

"*Words* of love, may be not; but what did your *actions* tell, Frank—your looks? I understood them, and so did she, and everybody else who saw you with her. You have not behaved just right, Frank."

"If I have won from Mary more than a friendly regard, uncle, I am very sorry. I really thought I loved her, until, I saw Isabel; and still I have a warm regard for her."

"Well, well, my boy, I hope everything may turn out for the happiness of all. Now I've a little plan to suggest, which if you will agree to, I think you will be better acquainted with your lady-love's true character; also that of Mary. After which, if you come again to me, and tell me you still wish to marry Miss Courtney, I will no longer oppose you."

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"Well, uncle, knowing you will not suggest anything that a man of honor should hesitate about, I'll consent." answered Frank.

And Uncle Phil., closing the library door, proceeded to disclose his plan.

Frank listened until his uncle had concluded, and then, after a merry laugh, he said:

"All right. I've no doubt of the result. But, really, uncle, I had no idea you were such a plotter. You have missed your vocation, I truly think."

"*Au revoir*," said Frank that night, after having accompanied Isabel home from a ball. She had seemed more beautiful and charming than ever, and Frank, when he bade her good-night, said to himself:

"To-morrow I shall be the happiest man living, or—Pshaw! I'm foolish to think for a moment of anything else. She will stand the test."

It was near noon of the next day that a hand cart, filled with beautiful plants, was stopped before Mr. Courtney's. The man, ascending the steps, rang the bell and handed in a card, on which was written, "For Miss Courtney."

As the man stood waiting directions concerning the removal of the plants, he heard a pleasant voice call:

"Isabel, dear, do come down!" and the cross, irritable answer:

"I'm not ready, and it is no use to hurry me! You expect me to get down to breakfast when I did not retire until after midnight. I think you might have sent it up to me!"

There was a grieved look in the mother's eye, a slight quiver of her lips, as she went to the foot of the stairs and said:

"It is not to come to breakfast. That is over hours ago. Yours is waiting whenever you wish it. I called you to come

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and see the beautiful flowers some one has sent you, and direct the man where you wish them placed."

"Oh!" in a modified tone; and a few moments after, Miss Courtney came down.

If she had not been so intently admiring the flowers she might have noticed the look of astonishment depicted on the face of the man waiting to do her bidding—and well there might be.

Could it be possible that was the girl of whose beauty and sweetness so many praises were sung?

A morning robe, dingy and soiled, caught up here and there by pins—substitutes for stitches—neither belted nor corded, but flowing loosely and trailing around her; her front hair still in crimpers, the back caught in a tangled mass under a net. She presented not the slightest resemblance to the belle of the night before.

"Take them in, and place them in the windows of the dining-room for the present," Isabel said. Going in herself, she dropped into a chair, saying:

"Mamma, tell some one to bring me my breakfast now."

"You will have to wait on yourself a little to-day, Isabel. The cook is sick, and Kitty has gone to market."

Before the mother concluded Isabel snapped out:

"It's always so when I am tired."

"Well, do not worry, dear. Here is your breakfast. Now eat it while it is warm, and then I want you to assist me a little. Papa is going to bring a friend home to dinner, and we must try to have things just as nice as if our cook prepared them," said Mrs. Courtney, in a coaxing tone.

"Indeed, mamma, if you choose to worry over the dinner, *I* shall not. I'm not going to ruin my complexion, and make my hands rough with such work. Besides, I have an engagement at two o'clock. Why could not papa take his friend to a restaurant?"

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"My dear, when a gentleman has a home and family, he expects—"

"Expects! Yes, entirely too much. Men are always giving unnecessary trouble. When *I* have a home of my own, I guess I will have my husband understand he cannot—"

Isabel was suddenly stopped here by a crash; and looking up, she exclaimed:

"Oh, you awkward wretch! You have broken the very prettiest rose!"

The man stopped not to pick up the fragments, or bring in the plants remaining in the entry; but pulling his slouched hat further over his face, rushed from the room and house.

"Oh, Isabel, how could you speak so? You frightened that poor man. My child, you should try and control yourself. You can be so pleasant at times!" the mother said.

And when Isabel answered:

"Mamma, we neither of us have time for a lecture just now, she turned, with a weary, sad look, and left the room.

The same morning, an hour later, Mary Fulton sat at the window of the pretty, cozy little sitting-room. The needle, which a few moments before she had plied so swiftly, suddenly ceased, and her hands dropped on the work in her lap. Her sweet face had a plaintive expression, which deepened as she sat so idly—nay, busy with thoughts which were far from happy ones surely, for the pretty red lips quivered like a grieved child's. As quickly she dashed away a tear, and said!

"This will never do. Mamma will soon be in, and in an instant her loving eye will detect the trace of even one tear. I must not grieve her. But, oh! I wonder what I did to change his feelings toward me? I was so sure he loved me, that I let my poor heart slip from my own keeping. True,

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he never told me of his love save by looks and acts. These last three months have seemed as years, only twice during which I have seen him, and then with a beautiful girl—the girl, most likely, who has really won his heart. Well, well, I must conquer this affection, and this is not the surest way. I must be busy all the time, giving regrets no chance to linger with me."

Again her fingers were busy with her needle. How pretty she looked in her neat chintz morning dress, with snowy collar, cuffs and apron, her bright brown hair, her wavy tresses, confined by a blue ribbon.

A few moments more, and she started up, saying:

"I must find something more active than sewing."

Just then a peal from the door bell, and very soon after the servant entered, saying:

"Oh, Miss Mary, come to the door and see the beautiful flowers the man says are for you."

Mary hastened out to receive from the man a card, on which was written, "For Miss Fulton, No. 22 Waverly street.

"How beautiful! Who could have sent them? I suppose there can be no mistake. This is my name and number," Mary said, again glancing at the card.

The man expressed his knowledge of the flowers having reached the one for whom they were intended, by going to work unloading his cart, and taking them into the hall.

Just then Mrs. Fulton came in from a walk. Mary stopped, admiring the flowers; then followed her into the sitting-room, and wondered anew who could have sent the beautiful present.

"Shall the man place them in the windows, he says, Miss Mary?" the servant asked.

"Thank him, and say, if he has the time to spare," Mary answered.

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Immediately after the man began to bring in and arrange the plants.

"How soon you are back, mamma. Surely you did not get through your shopping!" Mary said, removing her mother's wrappings, and gently seating her in a rocker.

"Yes, love, I came back much sooner than I expected, to bring you a disappointment, I fear, as well as making you very busy to-day. When I reached your father's office, I found there an old friend and school-fellow of his. I thought papa's eyes were asking, as plain as could be, for me to invite him to dine with us to-day, and so I did; and the gentleman readily accepted my invitation. When I was coming away, papa followed me to the door, and said he was so glad I had asked his friend to our home. And so I hurried back to set you hard to work—never reflecting, until a few moments since, that you had an engagement for the afternoon," answered Mrs. Fulton.

"Do not worry about my engagement. I am glad to stay home and be busy, to make dear papa happy. I can send a note of excuse to my friend, and then to work. Mamma, we will have a dinner papa will be proud of."

Just then came a bang, crash! Mary turned quickly to see, lying on the carpet, the fragments of a pot, and near by the scattered dirt, some still clinging to the roots of a rare rose in full bloom.

Mary might well have been excused if she had gotten a little out of temper. But she did not. The shade of regret which gathered for an instant on her face quickly passed away, and when the man picked up the rose, and began to mutter some excuse or apology, Mary said:

"Never mind. I hope the rose is not injured much; and if it is, I must not grumble about the accident for I am still very rich in the possession of so many beautiful ones."

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The last flower was placed in the window; and as the door closed on the man, Mary said:

"Poor fellow, I really pitied him! He is so awkward, and seemed either so frightened or bashful he could not raise his eyes.

* * * * * * * * *

"Well, Frank, my boy, the time has expired. Am I to hunt a fitting bridal present for your chosen one? I've been anxiously expecting to hear from you for several days past. I shall be true to my word. Am I to give my consent to, and blessing on your union with Miss Courtney?"

"No, sir."

"No, sir! Why not?"

"Because I've asked Mary Fulton to be my wife."

"What? Indeed! Hurrah! Oh, Frank, you are all right now. How happy we shall all be! But tell me how you so suddenly recovered both sight and senses. I had not expected my little plan to accomplish so sudden a cure," said Uncle Phil., clasping Frank's hand, and shaking it warmly.

"Oh, uncle, spare me a recitation from the first peep, behind the scenes. Sufficient to say, I thank you for saving me from 'a leap in the dark,'" said Frank, with a grave face.

"Ah, I see. The lovely belle did not care to be so charming to the awkward, red-headed cartman, as to the very eligible Frank Osborn," said Uncle Phil., with a knowing smile. "But I cannot let you off from some little hints about your second call and peep at the little 'home-spun girl.'"

"Don't, uncle, please, ever say that again. I am ashamed of myself ever to have been so foolish. Well, the red-headed awkward cartman found Mary Fulton more charming and lovely in every way than ever Frank Osborn had

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dreamed; more beautiful in her morning dress than in evening toilet—industrious, gentle, amiable, considerate. And so I grew more desperately in love than ever, and learned to adopt completely your idea, that, 'only a good daughter will make a good wife.'"

"But do you think she can preside with 'ease, grace and dignity' at your entertainments?" Uncle Phil. asked drily.

"Another thrust, uncle! Well, I deserve it. I know she will. I went in that very evening after my call, and found her entertaining her father's friends. I do not fear but so good and lovely a girl will be all I wish. I felt like picking her up and running off with her that morning when, after I smashed up her best flower, she was so pleasant about it. Bless her dear little heart! There is no reception hours or company behavior with her," Frank said, his face glowing with happiness.

Isabel never ceased watching and waiting for Frank's return to her side, until she saw his marriage announced; and then she could never imagine what it was that made her lose him. If she could have imagined that awkward cartman was the exquisite Frank, the mystery would have been solved.

Many times during the days of their courtship, Mary would ask Frank why he came not for those long months to see her. And when he answered by telling of the pressure of business, of course she didn't believe him, but continued to tease him to tell her until the day before their union, when, I suppose, thinking it better to begin wedded life with a clear conscience, he told her of Uncle Phil.'s ruse.

Doubly dear the old man became after that. And when, a year after, a baby boy rested in Mary's arms, she called him little Phil. Frank was not jealous a bit, hoping his son might be as good and wise as Uncle Phil.

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A NOBLE SERVICE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

As Lady Dudley entered her boudoir, already occupied by a trio of beautiful girls, the merry voices of two were suddenly hushed, and the bright faces which were raised to meet hers told plainly that they hoped she had not heard any of their conversation. A little apart, with downcast eyes and flushed cheeks, sat a young girl, who seemed desirous of concealing her face and escaping the observation of Lady Dudley, who, after a few moments, said:

"I am pained to think my entrance should mar my children's enjoyment."

"Oh! no indeed, mamma; it is not so," said Maud Dudley; "but May and I both have discovered that Cousin Constance has so far forgotten her station as to receive the very marked attention of papa's secretary. Just think of it! and of his presumption! he nothing more than a hired servant."

"My daughter," said Lady Dudley, her voice filled with reproach, while she drew her niece within her arms, "no position, however humble, is debasing, except it is made so by the occupant. The very fact of Edgar Stanley filling the one you have named, renders it at once most honorable. Dear Constance, if young Mr. Stanley has won your pure heart, I truly believe he is worthy of you. Although he may not be of lordly birth, his nature is noble; his true worth places him, in my estimation, high above many of

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the young noblemen who are received with so much favor by most of our friends. You need never blush for your love, my child."

"I do not, aunt; but, oh, I do wish we lived in the land where *worth*, not *birth*, make men noble. *There* Edgar would stand among the highest.

"Never fear, love, but Edgar Stanley will win appreciation here in your own home. I think we can gain your uncle's favor; and when your father returns, our combined efforts will win his consent. You shall be happy, dear. Now these young ladies here may tease, if they choose; but I do not think they will feel like it, after I tell them a little story.

"Long years ago there lived, not very far from this great city, a country gentleman, highly respected, and beloved by all who knew him. At his hospitable mansion were entertained many of the nobility. This gentleman's—we will call him Hastings—great liberality was widely known; never hesitating, he relieved the necessities of all who asked. Occasionally his wife would venture a word of remonstrance, hinting that such continual and enormous demands must eventually exhaust his means. He only would laugh at her fears, and say:

"'Could I call myself any man's friend, if I helped him not in his hour of need? Never fear. We shall not suffer from my blindness, as you term it. You, who never have felt the need of a friend, cannot know what it is.'

"'Heaven grant *you* never may' said the wife, solemnly, her heart filled with misgivings.

"Continuing in the old way, taking no thought for the future, he lived on until, one day, George Hastings awoke to the truth. Everything was gone! He was a ruined man. All gone in serving his friends. Yet not one came near to him, save with words, when the crash first came; all amounting to about the same.

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"'Upon my soul, old fellow, I'm sorry for you! Very much to be regretted,' and so on.

"After one and another removal to dwellings, each more humble, George Hastings brought his wife and only child to London, thinking in this great city he would more surely find a place of concealment. Here he hoped to obtain some employment, and remain unrecognized by those whose acquaintance had been his ruin. Extremely sensitive, he dreaded to see them turn aside to avoid meeting the *poor* man.

"In a lodging-house, occupying two rooms, scantily furnished, they lived. Their reverses came with greater severity, for being shared by one for whom the fond parents had planned such a bright future: their young daughter, just blooming into womanhood.

"Three years after their days of adversity began, when she was only eighteen, Mary's health failed—she was always of a delicate constitution. From constant confinement over her needle, and the change from a life of luxury to one where only the barest necessaries of life were obtained, she sank to a state of such weakness, that no longer could she contribute in the slightest degree to their support; scarcely able to step about the room without a helping hand. Hour after hour, through the long, weary day, the poor girl would sit by the window, gazing out into the crowded, smoky street, dreaming of the fresh, green fields, and dying almost for a breath of pure air.

"In vain the miserable father would hunt over the papers to find some advertisement of a position he could fill. But what could he do? Without a profession or trade, understanding nothing of mercantile business, what was there for him to find? His qualifications were not likely to find demand. A gentleman of exquisite tastes, luxurious habits, liberal education—high-toned and noble-hearted—his day

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of appreciation had passed. At length his weary eyes fell upon an advertisement which gave him hope. It was in substance this:

"'WANTED—A VALET.—Must come well recommended, be of gentlemanly address, and possess a fair education. Is required to travel for a few months with a young nobleman. To such a person will be given liberal wages. Address, X. Y. Z.'

"Here was a position he could fill. Returning immediately home, he wrote a recommendation for John Jones, and spoke of his being for years in his employment, and having given perfect satisfaction to the signer, George Hastings, of Hastings. With this paper the father presented himself to the young lord. Many applicants had been before him, but none accepted.

"The look of agreeable surprise was plainly visible not only on the young nobleman's face, but his mother's also. After a few questions, they had decided to employ Jones before they had asked for his recommendations. His bearing and language were sufficient. But the more prudent mother said they would like to see his papers.

"'I have only one, my lady,' he replied. And drawing that forth, he presented it.

"A glance at the signature, and with an expression of gratification, the lady replied:

"''Tis all sufficient. You could have none better. This gentleman was one of my husband's best friends.'

"She thought, this man's polished manner is the result of years spent in the service of such a gentleman as Mr. Hastings. She inwardly congratulated herself that her son had obtained such an attendant.

"The salary was liberal, amply sufficient to provide handsomely for one person; but for three it was a very small amount. Still, Mary could have a few delicacies, a

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little wine sometimes, and always then the necessaries of which she had at times been without.

"With a lighter heart 'John Jones,' as we must call him now, left his home, and went to travel with the young noble, who daily became more attached to his valet.

"After an absence of six months, they returned to London. Then it was that the poor gentleman's troubles began. It was of course impossible for him to associate with the other attendants. This very soon rendered him very unpopular; indeed, he had gained their enmity. He knew full well they would lose no opportunity to do him evil.

"His refined manners and really distinguished appearance were constantly commented upon by the young noblemen visiting the house, and frequently the remark, 'Oh, a gentleman's gentleman!' sometimes merrily, again sneeringly said, would reach his ears.

"The other attendants had been long enough in the service of my lord to establish a character for honesty. If they were otherwise, they so carefully hid it as to evade the slightest suspicion.

"A few weeks after his return to the home of the young lord, articles of jewelry of considerable value were missing. Insinuating remarks were directed to the valet, as a doubtful person, by the old attendants. With great indignation the young nobleman silenced them. Again, a sum of money was lost. Still no doubts of the valet's honesty entered either the lord's or his mother's mind. Still it was mysterious.

"Frequently Jones was called upon to write letters, and sometimes to draw up notes for the young lord's signature. One day, after visiting his home, and finding his darling child suffering more than usual, he returned to the elegant home whose luxuries he shared. His heart was sorely

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grieved to know how different his loved ones were forced to live. A feeling of deep depression came over him. Mechanically he did the master's bidding, his thoughts away with his wife and child. Fulfilling the direction to prepare a piece of writing for the signature of the young nobleman, he placed the document before him. A look of the most intense amazement was on the young Earl's face, as he raised his eyes from the manuscript and placed them on his valet.

"'What is the meaning of this, sir?' he asked, his finger pointing to the paper.

"Overwhelmed with surprise and mortification, the miserable man beheld his own name, bold, clear and distinct, as written in days gone by. He had forgotten what he was then—his mind wandering back to the old life when he had signed, George Hastings. No words of stammering explanation satisfied the nobleman. He knew something was wrong. The loss of jewels and money flashed back to his memory, and with it a thought that perhaps this man's dishonesty had helped to ruin the gentleman whose name he had signed.

"Indignant that his confidence had been so betrayed, the young nobleman was about to summon an officer for the arrest, when, in a voice trembling with emotion, George Hastings cried:

"'Hold, my lord! Spare me such humility until I have a chance to prove the truth. Go with me to my home, and know for yourself that I have written only my own name—one never before charged with aught of shame.'

"'You George Hastings! A likely story!' exclaimed the nobleman.

"'Go with me, that I may prove it. Know the reason I am here; know for yourself, that he who never man called *friend* in vain, *has none himself.* All so-called fled when his fortune changed.'

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"Unbelieving, but still impressed by the tone and manner of his valet, the young lord yielded to his entreaty.

"After a half-hour's drive, they reached the home of George Hastings, who preceded the nobleman up long flights of stairs, and ushered him into the presence of those for whose support he held that humble position.

"Involuntarily the Earl stepped back, as he beheld, lying on a lounge—her robes scarcely whiter than the thin face, whose features were marked with the traces of suffering—a young girl.

"'My wife, my daughter!' said Mr. Hastings, as the former came forward to greet them.

"Notwithstanding the dreadful poverty, the air of refinement about them was unmistakable. Immediately the young nobleman's manner changed. He listened with interest to George Hastings' statement. When one and another document was placed before him, he could doubt no longer. Starting up, he said:

"'Mr. Hastings, I beg your pardon for doubting your word. Can you forgive me?'

"Just then his eye fell on a paper unobserved before. The writing was a familiar one. Quickly he caught it up, and glanced hurriedly at the signature. It was a noble one—his own father's. With eager interest he turned to peruse the letter. A few words—enough though—he had read, when George Hastings placed his hand gently but decidedly over the writing, saying:

"'Pardon me. I knew not that was here. I meant not that you should see it, my lord. I beg you will resign it to me?'

"'As you wish. I have learned enough at present. My mother will tell me more," answered Lord A——, his voice filled with emotion.

"Hastily pushing aside the papers, he arose, saying:

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"'Will you be kind enough to drive with me home, Mr. Hastings?'

"His eyes sought the sick girl's, and lingered a moment with a look of deep interest and pity, and he said softly:

"'I may see you again—I must, and help to win you back to health.'

"Reaching his home, the young Earl sought his mother, told her the truth, and learned that, many years before, George Hastings had relieved his father when very much embarrassed. Diligently they searched, and found among the papers of the late Earl the exact amount of indebteness, which had never been cancelled. It was enough to give them again a home—humble, but one of comfort. Mother and son went together to the room where Mr. Hastings waited, and told what was due him.

"Of an ardent, generous nature, the Earl was earnest in his endeavors to repair the injustice he had done his father's friend. Frequently he visited them in their new home. His pity for the invalid grew into a feeling deeper and warmer. She knew he loved her. Life was sweet then; everything contributing to win her back to health—his love more than all else."

"Mamma, you have never said if she, Mary, was beautiful. And tell us—Is this a true story?" asked Maud.

"It is a true story, my love. Of Mary's beauty you cannot be an impartial judge, for she is very nearly related to you."

"Mamma, how?"

"Your mother, my child. George Hastings was your grandfather."

"He! my noble grandpa, who I remember so well! so handsome, so kind—such a splendid man!—ever a Val—Oh, no, mamma!"

"It is true, my love. Now I trust I shall never again

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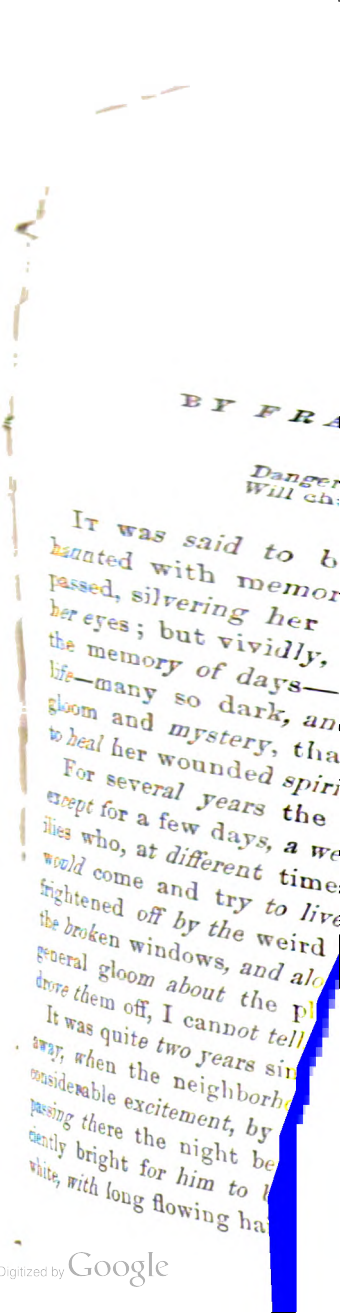
hear such remarks from my daughters as I have *to-day*. Think how they must pain me. You know not what reverses or necessities may be his who fills an humble *place*. Think not of the position, but of the occupant, and render full justice to his worth."

The sisters went, and with their arms about their cousin, sought her forgiveness, May saying:

"You are a truer woman than either of us, Constance. Your heart has directed you right, and our silly little heads have set us all wrong. Mamma has taught us better. We will both love Edgar, for your sake, if you will let us."

"Yes, May, you shall—for my sake now, and for his own worth, when you know him better."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LOST LEE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
Will change the form that best we know.—WALTER SCOTT.

IT was said to be haunted. To Susan Moore it was haunted with memories sweet and sad. Long years had passed, silvering her hair and dimming the brightness of her eyes; but vividly, from the dark vista of the past, arose the memory of days—some the brightest, happiest of her life—many so dark, and burdened with such a weight of gloom and mystery, that Time, the great balm, had failed to heal her wounded spirit.

For several years the house had remained untenanted, except for a few days, a week perhaps, by two or three families who, at different times, induced by the very low rent, would come and try to live there. But they were either frightened off by the weird moaning and sighing through the broken windows, and along the great vacant hall, or the general gloom about the place. What it was that really drove them off, I cannot tell.

It was quite two years since the last occupant had moved away, when the neighborhood was thrown into a state of considerable excitement, by some one's declaring that, while passing there the night before, he had seen a light sufficiently bright for him to behold a woman, dressed all in white, with long flowing hair, standing at the window. Of

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course it never entered the head of any one to watch the house in the day-time, or they would have known more about the matter. The watch began at dark. And sure enough, lights were seen flitting about for several nights. However, at last the mystery was solved. The ghosts were discovered to require something to eat and drink to sustain them. An old colored woman was seen to carry in a bucket of water. And Mrs. Pennyworth, who kept the little shop on the corner, locked her door, and gave an hour from business to the welfare of her neighbors, by going around to tell them that she herself had, that morning, sold to an old negro woman, who came out of and went into the haunted house, two loaves of bread, a quarter of a pound of tea, a pound of sugar, and a half-pound of butter. So of course it was fully decided that somebody besides ghosts lived there.

Yes, after the lapse of many years, Susan Moore had returned to the house where she first came as a young, happy bride; where her children were born, and one recalled by Him who gave him; while the other, her oldest boy, by some mysterious power had been taken from her. In the very room where she had sat then, she had watched beside her husband, straining her ears to catch his last dying words of love and blessing.

Many might wonder that she would like to come to live there again; but to her, it seemed waiting for her, and the best place for her.

It was very remote from the busy throng, who knew everybody's trials. There she could better hide her poverty. There her child—her Daisey, whose young life had been so cruelly blighted—would escape the society of one, the love of whom had caused her young heart such sorrow. Mrs. Moore had imparted to her child her own pride. Daisey would not enter a family to whom she was unwelcome.

George Armstead had seen Daisey, and being struck by

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her great beauty, managed to obtain an introduction; the result being, his loving her truly, and she fully returned it. When Mr. Armstead, George's father, came to know of his son's "blind infatuation," as he termed it, he became very indignant—swearing, if George married that girl, he would disown and disinherit him, and so on. Notwithstanding all that, the young man went to Mrs. Moore, asked her to give him Daisey, and pleaded continually for her; but neither mother nor daughter would yield. And when, one day, he went again to urge Daisey to marry him, he found their rooms vacated, and no one could tell where they had gone.

The little family sat around the fire in an upper room of the old house: the widow, her child, and Cassie, the faithful old servant, who could never be induced to leave them. Daisey was finding pictures on the burning logs. Her beautiful eyes had grown larger, and a deeper blue, the bright face so pale; and there was such a wistful, sad expression on it that it made old Cassie sad too; and after choking down a sob, she said:

"Nebber mind, Miss Daisey, honey! Dese times is most ober wid you. 'Deed is dey. Mind, I tell you! And ole Cassie's word always comes true. The Bressed Marster has been tryin' us all dis time, and jes now tings is bout as bad as dey can be. Day's goin' to break soon. I's tried to prove faithful, and the Good Marster will sure to let me see de light once more. Yes, honey! And you's goin' to be high in the world—rich!"

Daisey was diverted from her sad thoughts, and almost amused, by the devoted Cassie's endeavors to cheer her. But her mother checked the old woman's humor by saying:

"Don't talk so, Cassie. Rich we can never be. How could such good fortune come to us?"

"How I gwine to tell dat? May be Marse Lee may come home and bring it?"

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"Cassie, Cassie, if you do not want to break my heart, hush, hush! Gone forever is my darling boy!"

"Now jes look here, young Miss"—Cassie had known another mistress, who was "ole Miss"—"dat an't no way to grieve after Marse Lee. What he eber do to make you don't want to hear his name? I talks of mine dat's gone —'members all de *good* of him, nothin' else. Tells of how smart he was; how handsome like. Dat's de way to grieve after Marse Lee. And how you know he's dun gone for eber? I don't. I've been 'specting him ebery day since he's been gone."

"Dear mother, I think Aunt Cassie is right. If you would talk more of your boy, you would feel better. How long has he—my brother—been gone?" said Daisey.

"Over twenty-nine—nay, 'tis just thirty years ago, this month—aye, this very day—we bade Leonidas good-bye, when he entered the stage to go to Philadelphia. We never saw him again. Oh! why will you persist in wringing my heart?" sobbed the poor mother.

"Please, mother, do not grieve so. Tell me; you heard no word from him after?"

"Only from the stage-driver, who said he reached Philadelphia in safety, and got out at the stage-office. Nothing else, ever. The terrible mystery hastened his father's death."

"Thirty years! 'Spects Marse Lee tinks himself a man now!" mumbled Cassie to herself. And Daisey could not keep back the smile when she reflected that her half-brother must be, if living, then forty-five—an age rather to justify his thinking himself a man.

Coming to the wise conclusion that brooding over her troubles was neither a cheering nor profitable way to spend her time, Daisey arose, went into the next room to get her embroidery, from the proceeds of which she obtained the

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necessaries for their subsistence. Stopping a moment before the uncurtained window, she gazed out into the once beautiful grounds surrounding the house. Often she had heard her mother tell of that garden, with its luxuriant growth of fruits, flowers, shade trees and vegetables. Now all was gone save a few old trees, scattered here and there —only a wild, dreary waste. Returning to the other room, a sound reached her ear. After hesitating a moment, she said :

"I thought I heard a knock. Indeed I am almost certain of it."

"I 'spect not, Miss Daisey. Nobody knows us, to come and knock. You heerd de rats or de gh—someting else."

"No. There it is again, at the hall door. You will have to go and see, Aunt Cassie."

"'Deed I can't. I's not afeerd; but, you see, ebery time I goes down dem steps I heers more steps 'hind or 'fore me."

"Nonsense! It is the echo of your own steps, Cassie. When you lived here before, you were not afraid," said her mistress.

"No, Missis; 'cause den de soft carpets kep me from heerin' de ghostses, if dey were 'hind me. And den, when I gets to dat turn in de stair, de candle's sure to be blowed out by somebody."

"Oh, Cassie, it is a draft of air through some crevice, or broken glass in the window there. Please go, Aunt Cassie. There is another knock. I'll have to, if you won't," said Daisey.

"Can't! 'Deed I can't, honey; scuse me. Draf, draf! I 'member when de draf been de draf of people. Dem what it didn't kill, it skeerd to def. 'Deed, Missis, I can't go down dem steps. I'll holler out of de winder."

Both Daisey and her mother knew that they could not

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induce Cassie to go, and so had to submit to her opening the window and calling out:

"Who dar?"

The answer came in a clear, full, manly tone, that inspired confidence in the hearts of the mother and Daisey.

"I'm a traveler—very cold and hungry. Will you let me come in, and give me something warm to drink? A cup of tea or coffee?"

Mrs. Moore and Daisey looked inquiringly at each other. Cassie answered:

"De marster stepped across de way, and I can't let you in widout he say so."

Cassie was not going to "let on" that they were three unprotected females. Her mistress understood her wisdom. Turning to Mrs. Moore, she said:

"'Sides, Missis, we's got hardly nuff tea and bread for we den. Can't—'deed we can't. Cass mus look out for you all's breffas."

"Tell me where I can find your master, and I will go see him. I used to visit this house years ago, when a boy, and it seems natural to come to-night," answered the stranger.

Mrs. Moore came closer to the window then, and asked:

"Will you tell me who lived here then?"

"Mr. Neville. His son Leonidas and I were chums."

"A friend of Lee's!" exclaimed Mrs. Moore. "Yes, yes; I'm coming. He shall come in, Cassie, and have the best we have. Come, Daisey." And with a lighter step than she had taken for many years, she went down the stairs, followed by Daisey carrying the light.

A few moments more, and they returned to the sitting-room, accompanied by the stranger—a tall, finely formed man, very dark, with heavy black whiskers, which, like his hair, were thickly sprinkled with gray. Reluctantly Cassie began preparing the very humble meal. "Charity begins

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at home" was her motto. Frequently she would look at the stranger, and mutter:

"B'lieve him lyin'! He boy when Marse Lee was! No, honey. Dat man ole nuff for his daddy!"

"And you are Lee's mother? Your name is now—"

"Moore. Mr. Neville died within a year after Lee's—" Here the mother's voice trembled, faltered and ceased.

The stranger said:

"Yes, yes; I heard of his disappearance. But he turned up again, did he not, six or seven years after?"

"Never—never!" sobbed Lee's mother.

"Yes, he did—that is, I heard so from good authority. He told me so himself."

"When? when? Where did you see him? Oh, tell me of my boy!" pleaded the mother. "He was living! When? when?" she continued.

"*I* have no reason to believe him dead now. I've been with him within a month; and indeed, confidently expect to see him in this city before I leave!"

"My boy alive! Oh, thank God! Where—where must I go to find him?" exclaimed the excited mother, approaching and catching his hand, as though she wanted him to go with her then, to hunt her son.

"Sit down. Be calm," he said, gently placing her in her chair. And then, still holding her hand in one of his, he pushed back the hair that had fallen over his brow, revealing a forehead broad and full.

"Shall I tell you where to find him?" he asked, in a low tone, which was full of emotion. His eyes were gazing eagerly, lovingly into hers. She saw the look; her heart gave a wild bound. Her lips parted; but ere the cry escaped them his arms were around her, pressing her trembling form close to his, as he repeated, in a voice full of love:

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"Mother! mother! Yes, your boy is with you!"

"Lee! My darling! Oh, can it be true? Am I not dreaming, as so often I have, that Lee had come?"

"No, no, mother. I am with you—never to go away again. Your boy has returned to comfort you." And with his arms still about her, he told his story.

When he arrived in Philadelphia, he was seized by a press-gang. Seven years passed before he again reached his native city. He sought the old home; found only strangers, who could tell him little or nothing, save of his father's death, and his mother's marriage, four years after, to a man by the name of Moore or Poore, or some such name, they said, and had gone West immediately after. Heart-sick, discouraged, and almost reckless, he again became a wanderer. He engaged in trade, in an humble way. Fortune favored him; every undertaking proved successful. After all those long years, an irresistible yearning took possession of him to visit his old home again. He came to the house, not dreaming of finding his mother, but to learn from the occupants the name of the owner of the property, and possibly from him to obtain some clue to her whereabouts. When he had finished, he said:

"Now, mother, tell me of yourself."

She told him all—her trials immediately after his father's death; her second marriage, and removal West. After fifteen years, returning again, a widow, to W.; her great poverty; and finally, of Daisey's trial, and their return to the old house.

"No more poverty, mother. I have money, more than sufficient to give you every luxury," said the returned wanderer.

"Didn't I tell you so? I knowed he'd come back. An' rich too!" cried Cassie, exultantly.

"Yes, Cassie, rich. Your fidelity shall be fully rewarded.

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And my little sister here shall have a brighter future than the past. I know Mr. Armstead, the elder, very well, although I have never seen him; we have had business transactions. And I am quite confident I have the key to unlock his heart. We shall see if he is not very willing, if not quite anxious, to welcome you."

"'Deed, Marse Lee, ef I was you, I'd be doubtful about 'ceiving ole Marster Armstead in we dem's family. He'd hab to be mighty perlite, and plead hard, fust," said Cassie.

"He shall make full atonement for his former actions, you may rest assured, Cassie," answered Lee, smiling. "Now give me my tea. I saw how unwilling you were to share your little with a poor, hungry stranger. Oh, Cassie, you should have more faith. You might have known the Lord would provide you more, if you gave to the needy. Where are all your professions, Cassie?"

Cassie was a little confused, but muttered something about helping everybody until they had got poor from it, and no one ever helped them.

In a magical short time Leonidas Neville had established his little family in an elegant house, in the most fashionable portion of the city. His selection of furniture denoted not only an abundance of means, but very fine taste.

One morning, after they had become accustomed to their beautiful home, Lee told his mother and sister he should bring some friends home to dinner.

"Look your prettiest, little sister," he said.

Daisey and her mother were much surprised when, entering the drawing-room, Lee presented:

"Mr. Armstead and Mr. George Armstead."

If they were surprised, imagine the intense amazement of George Armstead, to find his lost love thus; and the chagrin of his father, when he fully understood that the girl whom he had treated with such contempt, and declared he

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would never receive, was the sister of a man of whose great wealth he was fully aware.

It was as her brother had promised: Daisey was made happy; and Cassie was fully satisfied with the elder Armstead's anxiety to make amends for the past.

So, after many years, the sun shone on the path that had been so dreary, and filled with sorrow, bringing them peace and plenty, joy and light, at last.

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THE POWER OF A SMILE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was at the sea-shore, the most fashionable resort of the time, that from one of the cottage windows floated out on the evening air a woman's voice. She was singing an old song—Kathleen Mavourneen. There was a world of passion in her tone, passion really felt, not affected, *one* was wild enough to believe, as, leaning over the instrument, he listened to her song. She had a wonderful voice; so full and powerful now, and again lulling one into a blissful dream by its soft sweetness.

The song was finished. Both the words and music had penetrated the inmost soul of Cecil Delmar.

"Why did you sing that song, Florence?" he asked.

"Because it pleased me," she answered, raising her eyes to his, and smiling.

How beautiful she was! And her smile! Did ever woman smile as Florence Carrington? many have asked; such a bright, bewildering smile was hers.

"Florence, do you know your smile is the brightest that ever lingered on a woman's lips," Cecil said, gazing lovingly on her.

"So many have told me," she answered, with a provoking carelessness.

"Aye, Florence, a smile which carries a man almost to heaven when it is given him, or sinks him to the realms of

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despair if turned on another. Florence, I never hear that song, 'Her bright smile haunts me still,' but I think of your smile, and feel as the poet must have felt. Yes, love, even in eye and heart it has lived, cheering, comforting, and bringing me back to you, ever constant and true—"

"There, there, Cecil; do stop! One would think you were rehearsing for a private theatrical," she said, turning again, and running her fingers over the keys of the instrument.

"Florence!"

"Cecil, please do not stare at me so; it is very impolite. I should have thought your traveling in Europe would have polished and changed you a little," she said.

"Changed! Florence, what do you mean?"

"I mean, Cecil, that three years might be expected to bring change to all. When you left home, I was a child, not knowing my own heart; and you—"

"A man, Florence, giving his heart with perfect faith to a girl he believed loving, constant, and true," Cecil said, his voice trembling with emotion.

"Nonsense, Cecil! Ours was but a boy and girl affair, and years have—"

"Changed the artless, loving girl to a woman of the world, no longer content with the devotion of one heart. Florence, you are trying me; say it is so."

"No, Cecil, nothing of the kind. I am sorry to grieve you, but it will only be a passing cloud. And you will, perhaps, thank me for considering your future welfare. You have work to do for years yet, Cecil; your fortune to retrieve, a name to make. And then you can think again of love. You wrong me when you say I am not content with the devotion of one heart. I am, and proud of it too. But it is the heart of one his country is proud of. And when so many fair women were sighing for what I have won, I should be content. See, Cecil."

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She took from her pocket a little portrait, and handed it to him. It was the face of one Cecil had seen lingering long beside her the night before—one he had known by reputation for years,—the popular bachelor of the time and place.

"Now, Cecil, I have acted candidly with you; can we not still be friends?"

He knew all then; knew she was lost to him; knew that the hopes of years were crushed; knew that the girl before him was false.

Aye, but knew not that more than to him was she false, false to the pleadings of her own heart. Ambition had conquered in the contest, and love was buried in the hidden recesses of her heart. The false girl vainly thought that in the brilliant future she would win, if not happiness, at least content, oblivion of the past.

The compressed lips parted; he was about to speak to her—to upbraid, or, perchance, with words of forgiveness, to part. Whichever it might have been was checked by the sound of a coming step—a firm, commanding tread. Both knew it. A flush mantled her pale face. With a cold, bitter smile, Cecil Delmar turned away. Another instant, and she knew he had gone.

"False girl!" he said. "Will wealth and position make her happy? Yes—perhaps; for surely she has no heart for aught else. How I worshipped her, believing her loving and true! Well, the dream is over, and life has nothing more for me. Could my loss of fortune have made her fly from me? Ah, she might have known how I would have worked for wealth and fame to offer her! How inviting the water looks to-night: The wave seems calling me. I *will* go!"

Cecil, leaving Florence, had wandered beside the sea-shore. Certainly life seemed very dark to him then. He

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believed the mysterious Future could not be more so. Mounting the bridge, he determined from thence to plunge into the bosom of the ocean.

Although a late hour, many persons still lingered there. Cecil seated himself to wait their departure. At length all were gone, save a party just opposite.

"Come, let us go," said one of them.

"No, no," answered a voice so peculiarly sweet that Cecil was drawn from his sad musings to listen.

"*Do* come, now, Louise. What are you stopping for?" again urged one.

"No, no, I want to stay—to enjoy this scene. What a glorious night! Ours is a world of such beauty, I often think how can one wish to leave it?" said the sweet voice again.

"Oh, Louise, as yet you have only seen the bright side of life. Clouds may arise—"

"Yes, I know. But don't talk of clouds. Now only see. The moon has stolen behind that huge dark bank, as if to demonstrate your ideas. But oh, true to life, the darkness is only temporary. Here our beautiful queen comes forth again, all darkness dispelling. I think the scene of the last few moments is a true picture of life, and with its lesson too. Oh, yes, I cling to our beautiful earth, never fearing its darkness, which I know must fade away, and the coming day be all the brighter for the dreariness preceding it."

Was she talking to him? Cecil almost believed she had penetrated his very soul, and was pleading to him for its safety.

"Louise, you should have been called Hope. That name would have just suited you, you are such a trusting, hopeful little body," said one of her companions.

"Yes; I know neither doubts nor fears. 'Hope on, hope

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ever,' is my motto. Come; now we will go, if you please."

She arose, with her friends, and moved with them until within a few steps of Cecil, when she turned, as if for a last look on the beautiful scene.

Was it by accident or design that a cluster of natural flowers fell at Cecil's feet? He had seen them in her hair a few moments before.

She stooped, as if to regain them, when Cecil sprang forward and caught them up. Quickly detaching one, he handed the others to her. She saw him, he knew, for the night was as bright and clear as noonday. Receiving her flowers, she thanked him with a smile—a smile so different from Florence's smile; not near so bright, but a gentle, sweet, pleading, saving smile. She passed on, and Cecil Delmar drew back from the entrance of the "dark valley," and followed—saved.

"Louise, what meant your words and actions to-night?" asked the gentle girl's lover, a few moments after, when they were seated alone in a private parlor.

"Harry, you know I meant something?" she asked.

"Surely. I know too, my darling, it was something of good only."

"Thank you, Harry," she answered, her eyes filling with tears of joy. I will tell you. You have often said I could read one's thoughts. Sometimes I can. That young man who sat opposite us I thought was waiting our departure to throw himself into the ocean. I watched him closely from the moment he came near. I read despair on every feature. I talked for his ear, and saw he heard and listened. Believing I had caused him to waver in his determination, I thought possibly I might save him. That was why I dropped my little bouquet, and smiled upon him. Likely I may never see him again, as we leave to-morrow morning. But heaven grant my endeavor may have helped him, if he was in despair, as I believed."

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"Louise, you are an angel, and have saved *one* man from destruction, I know. What I am, you have made me. If that young man was in danger, you have saved him too, I think. I saw him leave the bridge."

* * * * * *

Years passed on, during which many times Cecil Delmar's thoughts reverted to the girl who had saved him. Louise was a name to him the most beautiful and sacred. A little flower, faded and yellow, was treasured away, and prized dearly, when all reminders of Florence were lost and forgotten. He often heard of her in the world of fashion. Rumor spoke of her as not a happy woman. The man that many women smiled upon and "sighed for," as Florence had said, cared but little for the smiles of his wife. Perhaps he had looked into the depths of her heart, and found the skeleton hidden there.

Florence had told Cecil he had work to do. He had done, and was still doing it. Fortune had returned. Fame crowned him with her brilliant laurels. Fair women smiled upon him. Men were proud to call him friend.

Once more they met, ten years after, when Florence, regally beautiful, and a widow, seated in the "Hall of the Great," gazed from the gallery down upon the Senator from ——. The same old smile—the bright, bewitching smile. But she felt its power was over; gone, she feared, beyond recall. He hastened not to her side. She had almost despaired of his coming at all, when, as though they had parted but yesterday, he approached her. There was no hesitancy in his greeting. Calm, easy, and graceful, he accepted the seat beside her, and entered into a conversation on the popular topics of the day. What cared she for them? Was it of this she had dreamed, watched, and waited for? Skilfully she turned his thoughts, that they might drift back to other days. But he cared not to linger with the past, she felt.

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Oft his gaze wandered over the brilliant throng. At length Florence saw a look of great interest in his eye, and, turning to her, he asked:

"Do you know the young lady just leaving the gallery?"

"Slightly; I have met her. But she is not a very young lady—Mrs. Clifton. She is thought quite pretty," Florence answered.

There came a look of disappointment over his face quite unmistakable to Florence, as well as to a young lady friend who sat near, and said:

"Oh, but do not despair, Mr. Delmar. She is a widow."

"Thank you," Cecil answered, smiling.

And Florence saw the information gave him pleasure. A few moments after, the young lady left them to speak to a friend in another part of the gallery. Cecil Delmar and Florence were alone. Turning to her with a forgiving smile, he said:

"Florence!"

Hope brightened again. It was the first time he had called her so.

"Years ago," he continued, "you told me I might some day thank you. Perhaps I shall. You say Mrs. Clifton is thought pretty; to me, she is more than beautiful. To her I owe all that I am. She saved me that night you sent me forth despairing, reckless. I intended fleeing from the world which seemed so dark. Her words to others reached my ear. They were hopeful, cheering. I hesitated in my purpose then. A little longer, and she smiled on me. That smile was my salvation. Do you wonder that to me she is more than ever woman was before? Until to-day, I have never met her since that night. I shall seek an introduction; and if fortune favors me, I shall thank you for my happiness."

There was no bitterness in his tone. She would have

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liked it better had there been. He was dealing candidly, truthfully with her.

That night, at the President's reception, she saw him beside Louise Clifton.

She knew he was happy; that he would grow daily happier. The gentle woman was smiling upon him. Smiles not deceiving were Louise's, but sweet and encouraging, coming not alone from lip and eye, but from the pure, beautiful spirit within.

Before the close of the session, Florence read the announcement of the approaching nuptials of Cecil Delmar and the woman he loved as she knew she had never been loved.

She left the gay capital a saddened and disappointed woman. Life had taught her the severe lesson that wealth and position cannot satisfy the heart's yearnings.

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COURTSHIP.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"MISS KATIE, will you marry me?"

Never was there a more surprised girl in the world, and a very indignant one too, than pretty Katie Cummings when Seth Lucket came to her, and with as much coolness and composure as though she had given him a reason to believe such a question would be agreeable to her, asked her to marry him.

"Seth Lucket, what do you mean?" she said.

"Just what I say, Miss Katie."

"I have never given you cause to believe for a moment I would—"

"No; not to *believe*, Miss Katie, but certainly to *hope* so. You have always been kind to me, and—Well, I don't know how to do this thing of courting just as it should be, may be. It's a new thing to me. But I will tell you just how I feel. You've been always kind to me, and I've grown to think a great deal of you; and if you can love me, why, there's nothing on earth that is right but what I'll do for you. I don't drink, chew, nor smoke. I'm not fond of card playing, nor given to profane language. There is not much bad in me. Will you have me?"

"Not much good either. Thank you. No, I will not," Katie answered, her indignation a little mollified by Seth's earnest, respectful manner.

"No? Well, may be not. But I would have tried to

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grow better for your sake. I'm sorry—a little disappointed. But it won't hurt bad, nor very long. I'm glad I spoke, and found out before it grew any worse with me. There is nothing like taking a thing in time. Perhaps I can find some one else who will take me. It won't make much difference in the end. All young girls are lovely to me, all women good. And I'm sure to love any one who loves me. Don't feel bad about it, Miss Katie. I don't blame you for what you can't help. Good-evening."

And Seth moved away, whistling

"Coming through the rye."

And Katie exclaimed:

"Well, I declare he *is* an original. I'll wager something pretty he will court every girl in this village before six months have passed! Let me count how many. May Garner, Gertie Ashley, Fannie Bartlett, Georgie and Ada Campbell—I believe that's all, old enough for him to court during that time—with myself, six. One a month. Oh, I forgot. May be it is possible he might ask Louise Gaines—hardly. She is a little too old for him. Let me see. He is thirty, she is thirty-two, although she does not look it. If he had wanted her he would have asked her first, because he always has waited on her since he first called himself a man. I wonder what has come over the fellow, just to think of going a courting?"

Seth was a really good young man. No one in the village could say a word against his moral character. His want of energy was all his friends could complain of. He owned a little bit of a place, and managed to work it just enough to make a crop sufficient to keep him in clothes and enough to eat. But all he had he was always ready to give away, to any one more needy; generous to a fault. Folks said he would give his head away if he could.

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Well, to the villagers' surprise, Seth was trying then to give his heart away.

"I must get a wife to take care of me and what I've got," said Seth.

He was just a little disappointed when the prettiest girl in the village refused him. But as he had said, he could love any one who would love him. He possessed the greatest respect for all women. The memory of his mother, whom he really worshipped, made him do it "for mother's sake," he said.

It seemed rather presumptuous for Seth, with such a meagre amount of the world's possessions, to think of the girls mentioned. But nevertheless he did; and in three months more had been refused by the Campbell girls and May Garper. At first the girls each kept their secret; but it leaked out, and a merry time they had. Not one of them could flatter herself, though, that he was wounded much by *her* loss.

Seth possessed a good deal of quiet humor, and was pretty good company; always ready to be of any service he could to the girls. So, although they laughed at and snubbed him sometimes, they always made it right by doing better the next time they met him.

One day Seth left the village and went to the city; when, after staying four or five days, he returned, saying he had been having his wedding suit made. This he told Fannie Bartlett, who asked:

"Why, who on earth is going to have *you*, Seth? Excuse me—I mean, who are you going to marry?"

"I'm not quite certain *yet;* but somebody *sure*. And I thought it as well to have my suit ready, while I had the money to pay for it too," answered Seth.

And Fannie, trying to keep back her laughter, brought

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the tears into her eyes, which perhaps Seth misunderstood, for he said:

"Don't cry, Fannie; there is a chance for you yet. But I won't ask you until I do the right thing first. Here—look at this! It is the picture of a nice young man who wants me to tell you he has seen you, and sets a lot of store by you. And if you'll have him, you won't regret it."

Fannie took the picture and looked at it, Seth eagerly watching her countenance, which expressed a good deal of perplexity.

"I've seen this young man somewhere; but, to save me, I cannot tell where," said Fannie.

"I think you have," answered Seth.

"But where? Tell me, Seth." She looked beseechingly into Seth's face. "Why, Seth Lucket, this ain't you? I do believe—No. I declare it *is*—and it is *not*. Why, this is an elegant looking man, and *you*—"

"That's so, Fannie; but to relieve your perplexity, I'll tell you, and save you the trouble of telling me how I look. That's the way I intend to look when I am in my wedding suit, and when there is a Mrs. Lucket for me to look well to please. Don't you understand? Now I'll tell you how I got it done so. I went first and set for my picture at the photograph gallery; then I took it to a lady who has the most wonderful talent, folks say, and I know it myself now. I told her to fix me up, not as I *was*, but as I *ought* to be, to please my lady-love, in the style—hair and dress, whiskers and mustache. So she has done it well. Will you have the picture *now*, and me afterwards as soon as you please?"

"No, indeed; for I truly believe, Seth, you are crazy, and will end your days in the lunatic asylum."

"All right, Fannie; I'm a *little* sorry. You might do worse. And if you won't have me, somebody else may,"

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said Seth; and he went his way, smiling gently, and thinking, why could not the girls take a liking to him?

One more remained of the real young girls, and in due time Seth presented himself to her. This was Gertie Ashley—not near as pretty as some of the others, but a sweet, sensible girl, who, when Seth asked her to have him, said:

"You are too late, Seth. Somebody else thinks more of me than you do, I know; for he has asked me during the time you have been asking so many. Possibly, if you had come six months ago, I might have said Yes. But I'm much obliged to you, Seth, and I think, with you, some of these girls may go further and fare worse. I know you will make a good husband, and I know somebody who would make you a good wife; but from a rumor I heard this morning, I fear you will be too late there too. They say Parson Smiley is after Louise."

"What!" exclaimed Seth, starting up. "How dare he come after her? I'll make him *smile* on the wrong side of his mouth. *He* marry Louise! or any other man get her! Not while I'm about."

"Why, Seth, what do you mean? She does not belong to you or any one else, poor girl. She is alone in the world now—"

"Yes she does. No, she ain't either. Where am I? Haven't I been waiting on her for years? Although I never thought of marrying her myself, I never thought of any one else doing so. I've always intended Louise should be with me when I have a nice home and a wife. Parson Smiley have Louise! No, I vow he shall not!" Seth said, every moment waxing warmer. And seizing his hat, he darted out, without saying "Good-bye."

A moment, and he was back again, saying:

"Excuse me, Gertie: good-bye. And I'm much obliged to you for what you've said. You are the best friend I've

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got, and I will never forget that *you* brought me to my senses."

Right to Louise's home he went. She had recently lost her mother. When coming to offer consolation, Parson Smiley had learned how good and lovely she was.

Seth found the parson there. They sat quite sociably until nine o'clock. Then the parson looked at his watch then at Seth, and sat on. Half-past nine, and the reverend gentleman grew restless; looked again at his watch, again at Seth. And still Seth sat. Ten o'clock, and another look at the great silver time-keeper, with an exclamation about "not dreaming it was so late."

Another half hour, and they both sat—not on a bed of roses, I'm sure. The parson made a move as if to go. But Seth moved not, unless to fix himself firmer in the great arm-chair. Louise tried to be agreeable and entertaining, but she was very tired, and wondered why they both did not go, and more particularly what kept Seth.

The parson, finding his rival did not second his movement, had relapsed again to quietness for a time. Then in desperation he said:

"It surely cannot be eleven o'clock. I must be fast. Have you the time, Mr. Lucket?"

"No, sir. If I had, it would be sure to be *slow*, and like me, never in a hurry," answered Seth, going deeper down, and further back in his chair.

With a look that ought to have moved Seth, the parson said:

"So I see, sir. Good-night."

Louise accompanied him to the passage, holding the lamp for him to get his coat and hat. And Seth heard him say:

"I will call to-morrow afternoon, if you are not engaged."

And Louise answered:

"I shall be at home."

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"Curse him, I was going to say," Seth muttered.

He was looking cross enough, when Louise came in and asked:

"Now what is it, Seth? Something wrong with you? Has Gertie Ashley refused you?"

"Yes, and I am glad she did. She's a splendid girl. But do you think I care if the girls, every one of them except *you*, refuse me?"

"Oh, Seth, Seth! now you are too bad. You have courted every girl in the village, and in desperation come to the old maid at last—"

"Stop, Louise! You know I've been waiting on you for ten years. And *I* know it is because I have liked you better than all others, that their refusals never hurt me. Now this evening Gertie told me about the parson, and it was that which brought me to my senses. I never dreamed or intended you to marry any one. And now I declare, if you don't have me, I'll do something desperate. I always thought of you as belonging to me in some way. So you have got to take *me* or no one."

"Seth, look at me," said Louise gravely.

Seth did, and she saw he was really in earnest. She continued:

"Parson Smiley will ask me to be his wife to-morrow—"

"I'll choke him, so he can't," interrupted Seth.

"Hush, Seth. Of course I do not love him: but he is kind and good: and I am lonely, and with few friends, if any."

"I'm worth a dozen, if you only would believe it."

"Yes, Seth. But I saw you were determined to find some one else to love, so I have tried to think of you as belonging to any one but me; and so I thought I might at least be peaceful and contented in the parsonage."

"Now, Louise, let us settle this matter for ever. I *like*

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you. If I find I'm safe in doing so, I'll *love* you; and when I love, it is in truth. I've never yet told any girl I loved her, and they will tell you so. Now, will you take me? Marry me to-morrow?"

"Oh, not to-morrow, Seth. Indeed I cannot. But sometime I will, if you wish," Louise said quietly.

And Seth, kissing her, drew her down beside him, and said:

"I declare I never knew how pretty you were before. Now I won't try to tell you how thankful I am for your promise; but I'll tell you just why I want this matter fixed up to-morrow."

Seth told his reasons, and Louise's brown eyes grew larger, and looked as a child's when hearing a wonderful fairy story. When he had finished, he asked:

"Now will you have me to-morrow, Louise; or shall I leave you?"

"I will go with you, Seth," Louise said.

The next day Parson Smiley received a note from her, saying she would not be at home as she had promised. She was then about leaving the village to be absent for some time.

The parson could not understand what it meant until Gertie Ashley, who, with her betrothed, William Lawton, a young lawyer, having accompanied Seth and Louise to town, returned and announced the marriage.

The surprise of the parson, and the villagers generally, may be imagined, but where Seth got money enough to get married on was a mystery. He had told several that he had gotten his wedding suit ready, and that was all they knew about it. Some declared they were traveling on the little bit of fortune Louise's mother left her—about two hundred dollars. If William Lawton knew more about it, he said nothing, until one day, about a week after, the

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young lawyer displayed a letter he had just taken from the office, from Seth Lucket, written on the eve of his departure for Europe, to settle up the estate of an old uncle, who had left him a "little remembrance," Seth wrote.

A year after, Seth came again among them, looking, as he told Fannie Bartlett he was going to, when he had a wife to look well for—as elegant a young man as the picture he showed her. Louise's travel had wonderfully improved her, and no one for a moment doubted her being very happy, notwithstanding she knew her husband had asked six girls before her. Gertie Ashley was on the eve of her wedding. Seth and Louise insisted they should come to their home in the city, and extended the invitation to the five other girls, offering such inducements that they all gladly accepted. None of them had ever beheld such a magnificent establishment as Louise presided over; and each one but Gertie, I truly think, would have been better pleased if Louise had not looked quite so healthy and strong: no prospect in view of Seth ever being in the matrimonial market again. Oh, if it should be, I am sure never would be heard again the question, "Who would have Seth Lucket?" The "little remembrance" proved to be more than a million of dollars.

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SAY SO THEN.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was a face more childlike than womanly that turned from the mirror with an impatient little gesture, saying:

"What is the good of it? He don't care."

The beautiful face clouded, the sweet lips quivered and settled into a little pout for a few moments, as she stood at the window watching for somebody's coming.

The door opened. She forced to her lips a smile to greet her friend, who said:

"How very becomingly you are dressed, Bessie. William will fall in love anew when he sees his blue-eyed Bessie this afternoon."

Her lips quivered, as she turned aside to hide the tears which filled her eyes.

The quick eye of her friend detected the grieved look. Clasping her arms around her, she asked:

"What is it, Bessie? Cast the shadow from your brow, love."

"And over yours, Katy? No, no. 'Tis nothing. I'm only a little nervous. Let us talk of the opera. What shall you wear to-night?" Bessie said, trying to force a cheerful tone into her words.

Another moment and a quick step was heard in the hall, and soon after William Upton, Bessie's husband, entered. The little wife raised her eyes, not expectant, but a little

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hopeful, to his. She knew she was looking prettily. Would he tell her so, or notice it?

Nay, not even by a smile showing his pleasure, but the same greeting as ever.

"Hurry up dinner, Bessie."

She turned and left the room, but not without revealing to her friend the wounded spirit. Ah! that little quivering lip had told the story.

As the door closed, Kate Heartwell said:

"How very prettily Bessie is looking! Blue is very becoming to her. Is it not, Will?"

William Upton raised his eyes from the paper he had opened, and said:

"Excuse me, coz. What did you say?"

"I declare, Will, you have eyes and ears only for some business matter. I said Bessie was looking beautiful. But, of course, I don't suppose *you* noticed it," Katy replied, in not a very amiable tone.

William smiled a little, and then said:

"How strange women are! When a man is doing everything to make money for them, they grumble; and when he don't exert himself to do so, they grumble the more. There is no pleasing them. Of course Bessie looks pretty. That is, I presume she does. I did not notice particularly just now. But she is *always* beautiful to me."

"Well, then, why don't you tell *her* so?" snapped Kate; adding, "I know *I* should like a little less indifference from my husband if I had one, even at the cost of a considerable loss of finances."

"Oh, nonsense, Kate! Bess knows I think she is more lovely than any woman I know. I wouldn't have married her if I had not," said William.

"Then *tell* her so sometimes."

"I have, a hundred times."

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"Since you married her?" asked Kate.

"No; what is the use of such nonsense now? Bess knows it well enough."

"Knows what you *used* to think, you mean. And I know just this: when I please a person, particularly those I am seeking to please, I want them to tell me so," Kate said, starting up, as the dinner bell was ringing, and following William to the dining-room.

Kate knew Bessie had spent most of the forenoon in the kitchen, superintending and preparing something Will was fond of.

Kate, hoping to draw forth some word of commendation, said:

"Bessie, you will spoil me so completely while here, I shall never again relish any ordinarily good cooking. You prepare everything so nicely. And these lemon pies—no wonder Will is so fond of them—they are the best I ever tasted."

Again the blue eyes were raised, half hopeful, to her husband's, and again came words from him that Kate would have liked to have had choke him.

"Is it necessary, Bessie, that you should cook the dinners? If your cook is not capable, get one that is."

A goblet pressed to her mouth hid the quivering lips; and Kate fearing her wrath would explode, excused herself and left the table.

Will, absorbed in thoughts of business, never for a moment imagined that he had said anything to grieve Bessie or enrage Kate.

His dinner finished, Willie was hurrying off, when Bessie said:

"You won't forget the opera to-night, Will?"

"Oh, no. Be all ready; I will be back in time."

She looked as if she wanted to say something more, and William said:

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"What is it, Bess? Speak quickly. I must be off."

"Nothing!" she said.

He hurried off. A sigh escaped Bessie's lips, and turning from the door, she said:

"How different! In by-gone days, so very different! I wanted to ask him to bring me some buds to wear to-night. But he does not care how I look; and why should I?"

She went wearily up-stairs into Kate's room; and although she entered smiling to Kate, who had for weeks been watching the merry face growing first pensive, then sad, it was such a sickly little smile that, catching her in her arms, she said:

"Oh, don't mind it, darling. Will's heart is all right, only he has a dreadfully ugly way of showing it. He loves you dearly; but he does not think about those little acts which please us."

"Little acts! They are great, indeed, everything to me! Oh, Kate, if he would only say sometimes such things as he used to say, I would give even years of life to hear them. Nay, Kate, if he loved me as he should, as I do him, more and more the longer we live, he would show it—would tell me so. What would it cost him to say those words my heart is perishing for—words so little to him, so mighty to me? No matter whether I look sick or well, no comments. The same way when I fix anything to please him. He has grown indifferent, to say the least; and, O heaven, I dare not think what may follow!"

Kate tried to turn her friend's thoughts, knowing just then that all argument to convince her otherwise would be useless. She determined, at some opportune time, to have a long talk with Will on the subject.

Very beautiful Bessie looked that night, and Kate, whose eyes so often rested with admiration on her, thought William would surely make some comment. How could he help it?

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He came home in good time, and when he entered their dressing-room with an exquisite little bouquet of buds and blossoms, Bessie's heart gave a bound of joy as she stretched forth her hands, exclaiming:

"How beautiful!"

"Yes; Fulton sent them to Kate."

He could not fail to see the disappointed look on the face that had brightened and grown pale so quickly, and said:

"If I had thought of it, I would have brought you some. But Kate will divide; there are enough for both."

Oh, men! oh, husbands! flowers are some of the beautiful things of life, and women like to receive them; but the little act which tells your love is life itself. As necessary as the blessed sunshine, the gentle showers of summer to flowers, are words and acts which tell your love to the woman who loves you, without which the heart will wither and die, not always waiting to perish with the casket which holds it.

Kate's determination to have a serious talk with William Upton was prevented by a sudden call home. Subsequently a severe affliction banished from her mind the thought of Bessie's unhappiness.

William Upton became every day more absorbed in money-making, and Bessie grew so miserable in the belief that she had lost her husband's love, that, in mere desperation, she plunged into a whirlpool of gaiety and fashionable dissipation. Young, beautiful, accomplished, she won admiration always. Looks and words denied by her husband were lavished bountifully by other men.

Whisperings were heard of her unhappiness, and found their way to ready and evil hearts. Fuel was cautiously added to the burning fire; hints of another occupying the heart for whose love she would have died.

On one occasion William's thoughts were drawn from the counting-room long enough to express his admiration, in a

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very decided manner, of a beautiful woman, the widow of an old friend. His remarks were heard by one who made good haste to use them—one whose devotion to Bessie was known by every one, save her husband. Skilfully this man used his weapon, pricking her deeply, wounding so surely that the sore and bleeding heart was ready to flee to any one offering sympathy.

She listened, orphaned and childless; no aged ones, with wise counsel, to direct her; no caressing baby's arms to twine around, and hold her firm against temptation.

Words for which she had been starving were poured into her ear. Taught to believe her husband false to her, she promised to flee from him to one who vowed such devotion.

"To-morrow night, Bessie, my beautiful bird, your cage door shall be opened, and you shall be free. You will come with me then?"

"To-morrow! God pity me! Yes, to-morrow I *will* be free!" she said, yet darted back with a fierce look, pale and trembling, from the arms that would have embraced her, and with a bitter, moaning cry, sank, as the door closed, to the floor, repeating the words again and again:

"God pity! God help me!"

A little while, and William would come. Throwing herself down, she feigned sleep. Soon he came, bent over her, and drew softly back. With guarded steps, he sought his couch. Not long before, she heard him breathing softly, and knew he slept.

One long, last look, and then farewell! She stooped, and strained her eyes to see by the dimly burning light the features once all the world to her, and even then "too dear," she thought. He was dreaming; murmuring in low, soft tones, "My beautiful darling!" Again, "I *do* love you." The face so sad and softened a moment before, grew hard and bitter then, as she said:

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"He dreams of *her!*"

A few little things to gather up, and she was ready. With her hand on the door, she turned for one more look—drawing back in the shade as she saw him start up, and looking wildly round, call:

"Bessie! Bessie, love! Where are you? Heavens! what a fearful dream! Oh, there you are. Thank God! I thought I had lost you!"

She had dropped her hat and shawl, and stood before him with a look so intense and eager it was almost fierce, as she asked, in a thrilling voice:

"*Would you have cared?*"

"Cared! Why, what ails you, love?"

"Tell me!" she cried.

"More than to lose my own life, Bessie."

"Saved! Saved! Not lost! No, no; found! saved!" she cried, and sank, fainting, in her husband's arms.

Pity and help from the mercy-seat had answered her cry.

The foiled tempter received the next day a little note, saying:

"I am free now from all doubts and misgivings, and blessed with my husband's perfect love, to whom my inmost heart has been revealed."

She saw him no more. Yes, she had told her husband all. And within his clasping arms she learned to know how truly and solely he loved her.

In after days, Bessie's life was truly happy. And although she needed no further assurances of her husband's love, he gave them to her.

And once, in years after, when a young friend of William Upton's, recently married, was telling him how lovely his young wife was, William said, in a manner and tone that made a deep impression:

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"My young friend, tell her so. Say to her what you have said to me. Tell her so often, and, take my word for it, you will give her a balm to retain forever her beauty. There is no cosmetic like it. And in the far distant future, when time may have whitened her sunny hair, and dimmed the brightness of her eye, the heart which you have kept still young, pure, and happy, will illume the faded beauty of her face, which will still be to you the loveliest on earth. And then—why, then, *tell her so.*

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THE BELLE'S BLUNDER.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was during the intermission between the acts of a popular drama, that Mabel Courtland and her friend Lola Walton sat in the —— Theatre, the former listening with great apparent pleasure to the borrowed witticisms of Julian St. John. Lola had turned away, tired and quite disgusted with the conceited young fop. Her eyes wandered over the sea of faces. Standing not far from them, she observed a fine looking man gazing very intently on Mabel. A moment after, she saw him coming towards them.

She whispered to Mabel, who turned and raised her eyes as the young man held out his hand and said:

"Miss Courtland! How fortunate I am to meet you!"

Mabel, with a surprised look, said:

"Excuse me, sir. You have escaped my memory. Your name?"

A bewildered look, a flush of mortification came over his fine features, as he answered:

"Surely I cannot be mistaken! You are Miss Courtland. Do you not remember William Morris?"

Still Mabel Courtland's face retained the look of surprise, and she answered:

"Possibly I may have met you, sir. But it is almost impossible to retain the remembrance of all casual acquaintances."

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The flush died away, leaving the young man's face very pale. He bowed politely, and said:

"Excuse me. I see my mistake. This is not *the* Miss Courtland I knew last summer at Hillsborough." And with another bow he moved off.

Just then a friend of Lola's came up, and she had not an opportunity of inquiring of Mabel concerning the young man; but she felt sure Mabel had met him, for she well knew she had spent six weeks at Hillsborough the previous summer.

When alone in their room that night, Lola said:

"Mabel, did you ever meet that Mr. Morris? You must have, surely. He said at Hillsborough."

"Well, yes, I should think I did meet him every day I was there. But—"

"Oh, Mabel! How could you?"

"Hush, you unsophisticated little kitten! You will have to learn that a village beau for the summer months, is a very nice thing. One must have a walking-stick, you know. But when home again, he is of course quite forgotten. He is not of 'our set,' child. A very good, commonplace sort of a person; but—oh, horror!—what would Julian St. John, Claude Fitz Warren, or any of those, think, to see me conversing with him?"

"Why, Mabel, what is the matter with him? I'm sure, to my idea, he is far superior to that Julian St. John. He is very handsome, as graceful as can be, and—"

"Well, never mind, my dear. I had full opportunity of knowing all his merits. Ha, ha! I do not wonder he looked amazed. Now, you little old-fashioned piece, what will you say when I tell you I sang, rode and walked with him, until I really believe the poor fellow grew considerably taken with me?"

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"Mabel! Mabel! I did not think you would tell such a deliberate falsehood!"

"Come, do not indulge in such brusque remarks, Lola. It is not considered refined, or genteel."

"If refinement or gentility countenance such a display of, to say the least, heartlessness, as I have seen to-night, I would rather be considered something different."

"Well, we won't quarrel, Lola. If I could in any other way have dismissed the young man, I would. It was the surest, quickest and safest."

"You might have been polite, at any rate. It costs very little to be so; and its worth no one can tell."

"Now, little saint, commence your sermon. I might have been polite; but it would have given him *carte blanche* to have claimed my acquaintance elsewhere. No, it was best. The idea of Mabel Courtland being seen in conversation with a counter-hopper!"

Lola's face expressed the contempt she felt for such ideas, and, to end the conversation, she soon pillowed her pretty little head for sleep.

William Morris walked the floor of his room that night, and strove to drive from his heart the image of that cruel girl. Yes, it was true, as she had said, he had grown to love her. Six weeks of daily meetings, when Mabel was always so perfectly charming, ever welcoming him with the sweetest smiles. True, she had not invited him to call on her, when she returned to her home, and he had not ventured to. But at every place he thought it probable he might meet her he had gone, believing that she would really be pleased to see him. His social position he knew was not equal to hers; but, after he had grown to love her, he determined to "put his shoulder to the wheel," and surmount all obstacles, until he could offer her a position and home worthy of her.

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"Better so, that she should have crushed all hopes at once, perhaps. But oh, I believed her to be so different! I understand it all well enough now. I was well enough, in the absence of what she considered better game. Well, well, Mabel Courtland, adieu. Our ways in life are wide apart from this night. 'Tis unlikely we shall ever exchange another word. And yet, who knows what the future may bring? Yes, I can, I will crush this passion. It will not be so difficult, since I know her deceit and falsehood."

Lola's kind, sympathetic heart was really troubled about Mabel's rudeness to the young gentleman, whose refined and graceful appearance had placed him, in her eyes, so far before any of her friend's acquaintances.

Lola's social position was in every respect equal to Mabel's, and in mental acquirements she was far her superior. There was force and character about little Lola. She generally made up her mind to the right, and then acted it out. Deceit and falsehood she detested, and after the exhibition of both those traits of her friend's character, Lola lost the respect, and gradually the affection with which she had formerly regarded Mabel died out.

A few weeks after, Lola, on a shopping expedition with some country friends, chanced in the establishment where William Morris was employed. As soon as she recognized him, she went forward, inquired for some articles in his department, and purchased them. After that she became a frequent customer, and when, as it happened several times, she met him on the street or in a concert hall, she always acknowledged his acquaintance by a bow and pleasant smile. Now Lola was not at all in love with young Morris; her heart was given and hand pledged to some one else. But she was glad of an opportunity to be polite, and at the same time show to the young man how much she detested such rudeness and falsehood as Mabel Courtland had dis-

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played. And when speaking to her betrothed of Mabel's conduct to young Morris, Lola said:

"You know she might at least have been a little polite. A few pleasant words, a smile, would cost nothing."

"You are right, Lola, dear. Politeness is a good investment. It seldom fails to win; and when it is combined with such kind consideration as you always use, I think we may add, its value only eternity can tell."

It was not long before Mabel Courtland felt keenly and fearfully her mistake; not so much her throwing off a lover, but the manner of doing so.

The North river steamer, *The Arrow's* decks were crowded with an excursion party, principally composed of "our set," to use Mabel Courtland's expression. But, much to her surprise, William Morris was among the invited guests. How it happened, she could not imagine. But we will accredit the kind attention to little Lola, whose betrothed was one of the managers. Mabel was escorted by her devoted admirer, the exquisite Julian St. John. Although only eight months had passed, William Morris had entirely gotten over his love, and could, with perfect indifference, see her lavishing her bright smiles on whom she chose. It had been a pleasant day, nothing happening to mar the enjoyment, and the party was homeward bound. The band was playing, and as the tones of a charming waltz floated out on the water, fair forms were borne through the dance. When, in the midst of the joyous excitement, there came a tremendous shock—a crash; and in a second more, like wildfire — spread the fearful truth. There had been a collision — *The Arrow* was filling with water! In vain the pumps were applied, and "to the boats," arose the affrighted cry. William Morris, with a quick glance around to see where his help should be offered, saw Lola clinging to one arm of her betrothed, while on the other was an

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elderly lady. William started towards them just as Lola—brave, horoic little woman!—withdrew her hand from her lover's arm, and said:

"Look out for your mother, Henry. You can only care for one now. I am stronger, and will stand a better chance than she. Go! go! quickly." And she pushed him forward.

"I will take care of Miss Walton, sir. Have no fear. I will bring her safe to shore," said William Morris, who came up.

There was no time for thanks. A look of deep gratitude, and William knew he was fully trusted with the precious charge.

There had been a wild rush for the boats, which were quickly filled, dangerously so. And William knew their chance was better on the water. He had secured a life-preserver, and was arranging it on Lola, when his name was called. Turning, he beheld Mabel Courtland. At the same instant Julian St. John rushed by them, holding tightly a preserver, and jumped into the water.

"Save me! oh, save me, William Morris! Pity! forgive!" Mabel cried.

"I am pledged here," William Morris answered, his voice trembling with emotion.

"She must come too. Here!" and Lola snatched off the safeguard that William Morris was fastening on her, and with dexterous fingers buckled it on Mabel, and saying, "I am very light. Come! come! you can help both.

There was not another moment to stop for any other arrangement. William Morris was a fine swimmer. God blessed him with strength. And, true to his promise, he gave Lola safely back to her lover, and Mabel was laid fainting on the shore, to recover soon enough, however, to hear Lola exclaim, "Cowardly wretch!" as Julian St.

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John came up, to appear very solicitous for Mabel's comfort *then.*

From that day Mr. St. John was so well known, and the story of his cowardly desertion, that he was glad to keep out of sight. Mabel felt very grateful to both William Morris and Lola, and the former she would well have liked to draw again to her side. He was always very polite, but when each time they met, which grew to be not infrequent, and Mabel put forth all her "witching power," he could not be recalled. Then Mabel felt deeply the error she had made, and gave up all hope of winning him back. To do her justice, it was not altogether the fact of William Morris' having grown to be a general favorite, after the day of the accident, but because she saw and felt fully his great superiority over such men as she had formerly flattered and encouraged, that she wished to win at least "his forgiveness," she thought.

Ten years rolled quickly by. Fortune, that fickle goddess, ever playing at her favorite game of giving and taking, had not neglected the characters of my story.

Mabel Courtland's father had gone down to real poverty, with the many sufferers by the great financial crisis of 1857. Lola Walton had long since married, and was among the first widowed by the national struggle. And William Morris had for long years been missed from his native city. Neither Lola nor Mabel knew anything of his whereabouts. But others did; and hailed with pleasure his deserved success.

Lola had not seen Mabel since her sad reverses. When they did meet it was at the national metropolis, when both were applicants for positions under the Government. Armed with documents which she thought would insure success, Mabel, after many fruitless attempts, gained an interview with the man whose "word was worth more than all her pa-

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pers," she was told. Then again, as once in years gone by, she stood a suppliant before the man whose acquaintance she had denied. Like lightning flashed back the remembrance of that scene—the falsehood, the rude, heartless behavior.

He came forward with the grace and charming address of old, and said:

"Miss Courtland! Am I right?" He meant to inquire if that was still her name or if she bore another's. Her face flushed painfully, as she bowed in answer to the inquiry, which she thought was said as a reminder of another time. Oh! she would have given years of life to have recalled that dreadful mistake. Lola's words came back, pricking her severely too:

"You might have been polite. It costs so little, and its worth no one can tell."

Ah, well she knew what it might have been worth then. Without a hope of success, she told her wishes and heard his kind answer.

"It will give me much pleasure, Miss Courtland, to assist you. If I succeed, you will hear from me speedily."

"A polite way of dismissing me; nothing more from him. I know. And how could I expect even that? I was not so considerate. Lola was far wiser than I."

Two days after, Mabel was surprised by a call from Lola, who came forward to greet her, with a large envelope marked "Official," and said:

"Mr. Morris gave me the pleasure of bringing you this, Mabel. I was with him an hour ago, and he told me that he was just going to mail your appointment, and I begged to give it myself. How glad I am! Were you not surprised to find him in that important position? Who would have thought ten years ago that he would ever have the chance of being so kind to us?" she continued, rattling on in the same old impulsive way, unintentionally wounding anew poor Mabel's stinging conscience.

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"And you, of course, have been successful! You deserve the kind remembrance of both the Government and Mr. Morris," said Mabel.

"I do not know about deserving; only, for dear Henry's sake, Mr. Morris was very kind. He said, if desirable, he would send my work to me. And so I shall not be away from my little children," said Lola, with a glad smile.

"You are very fortunate, Lola. You have so many friends—"

"Particularly fortunate in having such a one as Mr. Morris," answered Lola, interrupting Mabel.

"Yes, and if I had practiced your doctrine, the truth of which I have since so forcibly felt, I might have felt better now in being under obligations to Mr. Morris. But I think few have suffered as I for one act of deliberate falsehood and rudeness, as you termed it then, Lola. I know *now* how right you were, and have ever been."

For only a year did William Morris continue to send Lola her work. And then, when her children had been for two years fatherless, he went and entreated Lola to resign her position and accept one, the duties of which, although more important, he trusted would be less arduous. She would have to receive, hold and keep the bonds whose principal should be paid with the devotion of a true and faithful heart. The interest would be in coin of greater worth than gold and silver: namely, the love which would never grow less, but purer and deeper as they grew old together.

A few weeks after Mabel received the wedding cards of William Morris and Lola. Gazing on them, she sighed as she thought what might have been.

"I did not expect this. It is kind and polite, but that costs very little, as Lola says. But its worth! Oh, its worth!" And Mabel's face grew graver, for sad experience had taught her wisdom.

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SAVED BY A SONG.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

FOLKS—I mean the women folks of W.—had thought at length they might pronounce George Pembroke "a good man," aye, "a wise and true man," for six years had gone by since his wife had passed away, and he had not, as far as they could tell, even thought of giving to another her place. But, O dear! scarce had they declared their favorable opinion, when suddenly George became the opposite of all they had pronounced him. At least so they said. How he had disappointed them! and without giving anybody a chance of finding out how foolish he was going to be—a sly man as ever lived. Well, it was wonderful how he had managed to go courting without the good folks finding it out. But he did, and married the one of all others that the folks were most opposed to. He declared, however, it would have been the same, no matter who his choice would have been. But really I do not think they were very wrong in saying "he might have married some one better calculated to make his children happy." But I imagine George Pembroke was thinking more of himself than of any one else, when he married the handsome, healthy girl, young enough to be his daughter. George's first wife had been a delicate, frail little thing, of whom he had always to be very careful and tender; so he thought in bonny Jane he would get some one able to take care of him in his old days. What Jane married George Pembroke for of course the "folks"

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knew, and were not slow in declaring: "Just for his fine house and money, to be sure."

Sometimes too late men remember they had forgotten to be wise, and so it came to be with George Pembroke.

Not many months after his marriage he felt this. Gradually it had been growing worse and worse with his wife and her step-children, until at length Jane had declared she would neither stand Master Harry's impudence nor Mary's idleness. Harry truly was very provoking. He disliked his step-mother cordially, and she did not try to change his feelings. In fact she seemed rather to prefer it so.

Six years before, when the children's mother was dying, she called Harry, then ten years old, to her side, and bade him take care of his little sister.

"You must love her dearly, dear, when I am gone. My little man, take care of my motherless girl; guard her from harm, and be very tender and gentle. She is such a frail and sensitive little thing," the mother said.

Between his sobs, Harry promised. And faithfully he kept that promise.

This it was that made the first trouble between him and his step-mother.

Little Mary had been very tenderly raised. Like her mother, she was a delicate little plant, requiring very careful culture. She had never been allowed to do any work calculated to tire, only that which would amuse and divert her. A very worthy woman who had been with them during their mother's illness, still remained, up to the time the new mother came. Very soon after she was dismissed by Mrs. Pembroke, who declared it quite unnecessary to keep such help. She should have a woman come to wash. The rest of the work she could do with Mary's help.

This state of things went on until Harry saw Mary growing paler and thinner every day. She was withdrawn from

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school, and made a little household drudge. One day Harry came home to find his sister crying over a large lot of tins which her tormentor had commanded her to scour. The little hands were red and swollen. Harry picked her up in his arms, carried her up to his father, and placing her on the sofa, cried out:

"Father, I promised mother to take care of her child, and I'm going to. She is not able to do such work. Look at her dear little hands! She shall not do it."

Just then Mrs. Pembroke came in. What to do the poor man did not know. His heart ached for poor little Mary, but he did not think it advisable to take any action adverse to his wife, who turned to Harry, and said:

"Go and put up those tins you scattered. If Mary had told me she was not feeling well enough to do them to-day, she could have put them off until to-morrow or next day. But work won't hurt her, and she has got to come to it. I'll not wait on and clear up after her."

"Why did you send Amy away then? She did all the work without calling on Mary. And now I'll put up the tins, but I swear Mary shall never scour them while I'm about!" Harry exclaimed, the tears standing in his eyes as he looked toward his father, a faint hope in his heart that he would side with him, but not one word came. George Pembroke did not raise his eyes from the paper he held. Harry, sore-hearted enough, left the room, and Mary soon after followed. What was said between their father and his wife the children never knew. But for a few days the little girl was not put to any very severe task.

The calm was, however, only before the coming storm. George called his son one morning, and told him that he should expect and demand of him to be more respectful to his mother.

"And in future, my son, when your mother puts your

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sister at any work, you must not interfere. Remember. I am convinced such work will not hurt Mary."

"Is Mary to scour and scrub, sir?" Harry asked, the angry blood mounting to the roots of his hair."

"If your mother wishes or thinks it proper."

"*My* mother! My mother is in heaven, sir. And this woman hates us; you know she does, father. She does not try to make us love her. And if you don't care for poor little Mary, I will. I promised mother, and I will," Harry said, his voice almost choked by his emotion.

George Pembroke said no more. How could he, when his own heart was sorely troubled? He left the room; and Harry, boy though he was, and sixteen too, burst into tears. Getting a little calmer, he sought his sister, to find her, with a pail and scrub-brush, just going down the kitchen steps. She looked so pale and sick! He could not stand it. Seizing the brush, he threw it across the yard, and kicked the pail after it. A terrified look was now in the poor girl's eyes as she whispered:

"Oh, Harry, dear, what have you done? Oh, it will make things worse for us!"

"I can't help it. The worst might as well come at once."

From an upper window Jane Pembroke had witnessed the scene.

An hour after, when her husband returned, white with anger and rage, she recounted it, and said:

"One or the other must go—that boy or I. If it was not for him I could get on with Mary. He puts it in her head to resist my will, and I will neither stand her idleness nor his impudence."

"He shall go," George Pembroke angrily said to his wife, and to Harry, a little while after.

"Very well, father; the day may come when you will

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regret having driven your own son from home. I don't care, except for poor little Mary's sake. If I could only take her too! Oh, mother in heaven, watch over and save your child. I am driven from her!" he said.

George Pembroke's whole frame quivered. He was not sending his child away in anger; only with a hope of making things better for all.

"Darling sister, try to bear up. I'll work day and night until I make a home for you. It won't be very long, and then we will be happy, so happy, Harry said.

"Harry, I can't live if you go. My poor heart will surely break. Oh! you must not leave me. I won't let you. I'll put my arms around you, and clasp you so tightly, that you cannot get from me," the poor child said, between her sobs.

"Mary, you must be brave, and bear this for *my* sake. Father has said I must go. You must have more pride for both of us. We cannot beg him, even by actions, to let me stay," Harry said, holding up his head, and trying to look calm and brave.

"Oh, what shall I do? Don't you know I shall die if you leave me? And you will not let me try to keep you. But one thing I *can* do; I can pray. Yes, yes; I will pray —pray so hard that God will hear, and do what He knows will be best for me."

She sank down beside her little bed, and burying her head within its folds, began her prayer.

Sobbing and praying she remained until, exhausted, she sank to sleep. Harry stole away to pack his things for his departure the next morning.

It was late in the afternoon, quite twilight, when little Mary awoke. The great dread had passed from her. She felt really quite light-hearted. Bathing her face, and arranging her hair, she went down. Everything was so still, she thought all were out.

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A moment after, she heard Harry's voice on the porch.

"Thank you, father," he said.

And Mary stepped out in time to see Harry clasp the spring of a well-filled portmannie, and place it in his pocket. Her heart gave a bound of terror then. She knew that money was to pay his way from home.

The father sat at a little distance, his head bowed, and resting on his hand. Mary knew how grieved he was, and started forward to throw herself at his feet and plead with him. Harry felt what she was about to do. Quickly putting forth his hand, he caught and drew her down beside him. Thus she sat within his caressing and ever-protecting arms, her poor little heart throbbing wildly as she thought years might pass before they would be together again. With her head resting against his breast, they remained in perfect silence. All hearts were too full for utterance. The feeling of calmness which had been frightened so suddenly away, gradually returned, as a voice from the soft evening breeze seemed whispering to her, "Be not troubled."

So absorbed were they with their sad thoughts, that none heard approaching footsteps, and were suddenly aroused by the sounds of music.

A party of harpers stood at the little wicker gate. They were playing a simple piece, a sweet, sad melody, which seemed to accord well with the listeners' feelings. A woman's voice accompanied the instruments, not with words, only humming the air softly and sweetly a while, and then a strain came, in which her voice was filled with a wild, mournful tone, that made a deep and strange impression on George Pembroke's heart. The song was finished.

"Play that over," he said; and again the woman's voice fell on his ear, then sweeter and sadder than before. She knew that he was pleased, and sang to please him the more.

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"What is it?" George Pembroke asked, starting up and approaching the musicians. In the door stood Jane, she, too, attracted by the sweet sounds. The woman who stood forward, holding a tambourine to receive the money, seemed not to understand his question—a puzzled look on her face. Again he asked:

"What is it?"

Thinking, likely, he meant what should he give her in pay for her song, she smiled, nodded, and answered:

"Oh, one leetle—"

"No, no. He means, what is the name of the piece you sang; what do you call it?" Jane said, coming forward.

"Ah, yes, I understand now. The name is, 'Driven from Home,'" the woman answered, in broken English.

The eyes of George Pembroke and his wife met, as he repeated the words, "Driven from Home!"

The musicians moved off, bowing and smiling, well pleased at the good price they had received for their music, little imagining the power of that song.

Jane knew the spell was broken. No longer she held the power to make her husband miserable. She had read that plain enough, brief as was the moment their eyes had sought each other's.

The bowed head was erect now; the old, haggard, care-worn look gone; in its place, an expression of calmness and determination. Jane felt that in the future she could only rule kindly and gently.

Mary's soul was in her eyes. As she looked at her father, he smiled lovingly, assuringly on her, and said:

"Harry, your sister is looking as if she might like a holiday. I think I can trust you to give her a trip down the river to-morrow. Start early, and bring her back to us with a brighter look in the evening. Your mother will send for Amy, while you are gone, to relieve her. The

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weather is getting too warm, too, for Mary and mother to work so much. I must take better care of both in the future."

And so the cloud gave way. Oh, what a bright, beautiful sunset there was that evening!

No words of explanation, no thanks, except through Mary's eyes, were spoken. But that night, when alone with his wife, George Pembroke said:

"When you are a mother yourself, Jane, you will be gentle with an absent mother's children. Have patience, now, and in the future love will come and win a return."

There was no longer any trouble in George Pembroke's home. The children were respectful, Jane no longer cruel or unjust.

Mary whispered to Harry, when she kissed him good-night:

"My prayer is answered."

And he replied:

"Yes; through the power of a song."

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THE PRIEST'S STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Clasp me a little longer on the brink
Of fate! while I can feel thy dear caress;
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess,
That thou hast been to me all tenderness."—CAMPBELL.

THE magnificent steamer Magnolia was just landing her passengers on one of the piers of the Crescent City. Among the crowd leaving the deck might be seen a fine looking middle-aged man, on whose arm rested a young girl. Placing his fair companion in the carriage waiting, he turned and spoke to the driver:

"Do you see that priest walking just ahead there? I want you to keep in sight of him. His face is strangely familiar. Do you know who he is, driver?"

"Ah, faith! and it's myself that's blessed with the knowing of him! It's Father Jerome, sure; and may the Lord shower blessings on his holy head! It's all the poor and miserable that knows Father Jerome's goodness!" answered the son of Erin.

"If it were not for those priestly robes, I would say it was my old friend and class-mate, Charley Mayo. Keep a little behind him, driver; I want to get a better chance of watching him."

Slowly the carriage rolled on. Intently its occupant watched the reverend father. Turning to his companion, he said:

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"I cannot be mistaken. That priest is surely my friend; and notwithstanding his robes would contradict it, I shall speak and claim him as such."

And tapping at the window, he called to the driver to stop; and opening the door, stepped from the carriage, ordering it to wait there. He hurried on, and overtaking-ing the priest, said:

"Stop, my friend! Although twenty-five years have passed since I saw you, I cannot fail to recognize my dear friend; Mayo you surely are."

And clasping the hand of the priest, he shook it long and warmly.

"You are right, Lovering. I am he the world once knew as Charles Mayo." And a look of deep sorrow overspread the reverend father's face.

"Why do I see you thus? Why in these robes? 'Tis strange that your face should be the first to meet my eye! You remember the last time we met—your wedding-night. I stood beside you. Where is your wife? Have you children? Oh, tell me, dear old friend, what means this sad face and mien?"

"Have mercy, and recall not the past! My once wife is no longer of this world. I have no children save those of the Church. Remember no more Charles Mayo, but know Father Jerome, who gladly claims your friendship!"

The decided words, the sorrowful manner, were not to be resisted.

"Be it as you will. Of course I have no right to seek any knowledge you are not willing to impart. I shall be in the city but a few days. I've brought my only child, my motherless girl, to make a visit to her relatives. I shall leave her here for a time, and then return to my business in London. Do let me see you as much as possible while here?"

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"You will find me at the college from two until five. I shall always be happy to see you," answered Father Jerome.

"To-morrow, then, I shall be with you, and bring my daughter to see you. Good-bye."

The friends parted, to meet again many times at the priest's apartments. But during none of these meetings could Mr. Lovering penetrate one step back in the past, or draw one word from his old friend in explanation of the mystery surrounding him. At last, on one occasion, a few days previous to Mr. Lovering's departure from the city, Father Jerome said:

"My friend, I have noticed what a very sad face your daughter has. I grieve to see one so young seem so sorrowful. Indeed her expression at times seems almost hopeless. She does not seem in poor health. What is it? The loss of her mother?"

"No, no; neither bad health, nor her mother's loss. It is a love affair. I will tell you. You see she is beautiful, and, of course, has had many admirers; the most persistent and devoted one being an Englishman, a very worthy young man, and of noble birth—a young lord. She has given her heart to him; and nothing I can do or say will have any effect to change her. I've told them both I never would consent to a union between them. So I have brought her over to visit her mother's relatives, hoping absence may work a favorable change over her.

"I never will consent to my daughter's marrying any but one of my own countrymen. I love my country and all her sons, and none other will I call mine, of noble birth though they may be. Another reason: I have other views for her. A high position here she has the opportunity of holding, and I would almost as soon see her—"

"Dead!" asked the priest in a hollow, almost frightful tone, "as to thwart your wishes?" he continued.

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"Well, not exactly that perhaps, but—"

"Stop! I will tell you a story, from which you may profit," said the priest.

"Less than ten years ago, in this State, lived a man high in social and political position, of very decided opinion and strong prejudice. He had no kindly feeling toward any man adverse to his way of thinking. His time, his money, were all devoted to the advancement of his political views. In the same legislative body with himself was a young man —one of fine mind, brilliant talents, and swiftly rising career—belonging to the opposite side of politics. The older man beheld in the young one the probable check to his own advancement. He hated him for his opinions; he was jealous of his favor with the people. They were thrown much together in the social circle, young Hastings' society being courted by the first families of the State. In one of these he met the daughter of the man whose rival he was. He soon learned to love her, and sought the father to obtain permission to offer her his hand. Feeling confident in his own worthiness, his heart was buoyant with bright anticipations. Judge of his surprise to be met with absolute rudeness, and a firm, decided refusal; giving him no explanation or reason, save that such a union was very objectionable, and never would be listened to with any favor. In vain Hastings pleaded, and finally departed, feeling sure that to political prejudice alone he owed his rejection. The father then sought his daughter, his only child, and commanded her to dismiss from her mind any idea of young Hastings ever being more than a mere acquaintance. Deaf to all her entreaties, regardless of his wife's earnest solicitations for their child's happiness, he continued. Daily he saw the unmistakable signs of the deep sorrow he was causing. He knew he was crushing the light from out that young heart, hitherto so bright and

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joyous. The sunshine of his home he saw gradually fading beneath his harsh treatment, yet there came not one thought of relenting—one pang of remorse.

"Poor child! she was subjected to the severest scrutiny; every action watched, kept almost a prisoner, for fear she might meet her lover while visiting her friends. Every chance which might either bring hope or comfort was guarded against. The father's will was the law of the whole plantation; no one dared to oppose or evade it.

"Weeks passing on brought the birthday of the poor girl, eighteen years only, and life without one hope for her! 'Twas the father's custom to bestow some boon, or gratify any wish his daughter might desire on that day.

"The hours wore on, and she came not as she was wont, to place her arms round her father's neck and whisper her wish.

"For the first time since her infant tongue could lisp, 'Papa, please,' he missed the joy of blessing and making his child happy.

"Hard and unyielding as he was, this silence was keenly felt, and spoke more forcibly to the father's heart than all the words of entreaty, and the tears so often stealing quietly down the pale cheeks. Yet he could not relent. While brooding over this, a servant came in and placed the papers and letters from the post-office before him.

"The quick eye of Rose, his child, caught what had not then met his, and springing forward and clasping her arms around him, she cried:

"'Papa, my birthday wish! That letter, give it me—oh, do?'

"Looking at the one she was pointing to, he beheld inscribed, in a clear, manly hand, his daughter's name. Taking it up and examining the post-mark, he found it was from the neighboring city. Surmising the author, he said:

"'Do you know from whom it is?'

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"'Oh, yes! Give it to me, papa. Grant me this boon to-day!'

"'Rose, anything else, but this I cannot. Banish that man from your mind and heart, and be my own bright, loving girl again. We will go and travel, little one, and you will soon forget this cloud,' said her father.

"'No, no, papa! Give me my letter. I cannot give him up—not so suddenly, anyhow. Give me time, papa. Perhaps he may be going away, and that letter is to say good-by. Oh, give me some little comfort for his absence! Let me have that to read first, and I will return it to you. You may see all he says,' she pleaded.

"'Foolish girl! You would cling to this comparative stranger against your parent's will! You would resign the love of years for his! You should have more confidence in the judgment of your father, believing he seeks your happiness. Say no more; you cannot have this letter.'

"'Papa, have mercy! Remember your own young love. As my mother loved you, so love I Earnest Hastings. With perfect confidence in his worthiness, I would cling to him to the end of life. You may force me to give him up, but I will never cease to love him until I cease to live. Papa, once more I entreat you; *will* you give me my letter?'

"'No, a thousand times no!' answered the hard, cruel man.

"The father's determined spirit was at work in the hitherto gentle, submissive child, rendered desperate by the continued, unyielding tyranny. She sprang forward, and snatched from his hand the coveted letter, saying, 'Then, heaven forgive me, but I *will* have it!' she fled, with deer-like swiftness, from his presence.

"Bewildered, completely stunned indeed, at the unexpected action, it was some time before her father could recover himself—too late to overtake and prevent her reading the letter.

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"There was no more loving intercourse then between the father and child. Weeks more rolled on, and from his servant he heard of clandestine meetings between the lovers. A little while more, and there came a hint of a possible elopement.

"Sending for his daughter, he told her of what had come to his knowledge, and concluded by warning her that he should keep a watch himself, and if finding any one trespassing on, or hovering around his premises, he should regard him as a robber, and deal with him as such; and if she had any regard for her lover's life, she had better let him know into what danger he might come! A look of great terror passed over the sad face, and she fled from the sight of the violent, unnatural father.

"That night he began his watch, fully determined to discover the truth of the reports he had heard. He concealed himself among the shrubbery near his child's window. Believing her safe in her room, he expected most likely Hastings would come, and by some well-known signal bring her to the window.

"He had not very long to wait. The moon had been shining very brightly, but just then had passed behind a cloud, but lending still light enough for him to discover a figure wrapped in a long cloak and wearing a cap, stealing cautiously along in the direction of where he was concealed. The demon's power was over him. Thoughtless of everything else but his hate for the man he believed before him, he drew his revolver and fired. The loud report, a dying shriek, a woman's voice, filled the father's ears. Servants, with lights, rushed affrighted to the scene. The miserable, wretched man rushed forward to behold—"

Here a deep groan escaped the priest's lips. His whole frame was convulsed by the most violent emotions. Rising, he paced the room for some moments, then sank again into his seat, and hoarsely whispered:

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"—His child! the flower that had been fading for months under his harsh treatment, now dying before him—by his hand!"

"'Thank—God—'tis—I,—not—Earnest,' came in broken words between the gasps for breath. "I—went—to warn —him—'

"Catching her in his arms, the terror-stricken father was about bearing her in the house, when hurried steps were heard, and another figure appeared on that terrible scene—Earnest Hastings. The dying eye brightened, and with a feeble effort to raise her arms, she whispered:

"'Take me, Earnest.'

"The murderer made no attempt to resist, but yielded her to the arms waiting to receive her, standing appalled by the result of his hatred, his vindictive jealousy. He cowered beneath the eye of the young man, flashing wild with terror and grief upon him.

"She was sinking rapidly. Once more her lips essayed to speak, and we caught the words, 'Earnest—papa—forgive—' And with nestling motion closer to his bosom, she laid *his*—in death!"

Mr. Lovering was much affected by the sad story he had heard, rendered far more oppressive by the deep emotion of Father Jerome. After a few moments' silence, he asked:

"Tell me. What of her miserable father? Was there nothing done with him?"

"Nothing by law. A simple verdict, 'Accidental death.' But remorse and grief work a surer, a more dreadful punishment."

"Where now are the lover, father, and mother? Tell me all," said Mr. Lovering.

"Behold the wretched, guilty father, your former friend, Charles Mayo! here in constant penance, privation, and prayers, endeavoring to gain forgiveness, and in a slight

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degree ease the pangs of remorse! The stricken mother!—the poor and suffering now bless her as the Sister of Mercy who has the charge of the —— hospital. In Earnest Hastings know the celebrated statesman now standing so high in the favor of his countrymen. He has never married; he never will. We hear of him, with all his brilliant prospects, his high position, as one passing through this world 'with his heart wrinkled long before his brow.' You, I, and a few others alone know the cause. Now go; leave me! I have imposed this severe trial on myself, hoping it may work some good. Soften your heart, and gladden your daughter's."

A few days after this interview, Father Jerome received another visit from his old friend. This time his daughter was with him. With a beaming face, she came quickly up to the priest, and seizing his hand, she pressed it to her lips, saying:

"Heaven bless you, dear father, as you have blest me."

"Yes, my dear friend, we have come to bid you good-bye. I am going to take my child back to life and love, you having taught me to feel how vain are all our aims and worldly ambitions, compared to peace of mind. Give me this, with the hope of heavenly favor, and I will give the course of true love no more trouble by my actions."

A few months after this, Father Jerome received a package from London, inclosing the wedding-cards of his friend's child, accompanied by a munificent bequest from the happy husband, to be used among the poor and needy under his care.

THE END.

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